

BANDWAGON

THE JOURNAL OF THE CIRCUS
HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC.

NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 1999



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This is the cover of a children's book by P. T. Barnum published in 1888. It is an example of Barnum's wide ranging interests. The original is in the Pfening Archives.

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THE 2000 CHS CONVENTION

The 2000 Circus Historical Society convention will be held in Bloomington, Illinois, September 6-10. The convention circus will be Carson & Barnes. Full details in the next issue.

SEASON REVIEW

Photos, illustrations, newspaper ads and general circus information for

the 1999 season review should be sent to the editor.

Especially needed is information on small, little known circuses.

All help will be appreciated.

ADDRESS CHANGES

Bandwagons with wrong addresses are returned at a cost of \$1.65 postage due. Please advise the editor in advance of your move. These issues can not be replaced at no charge.

Holiday Greetings

from the Pfenings
Fred Jr. and Fred III

38 YEARS
RIDING ON THE
BANDWAGON

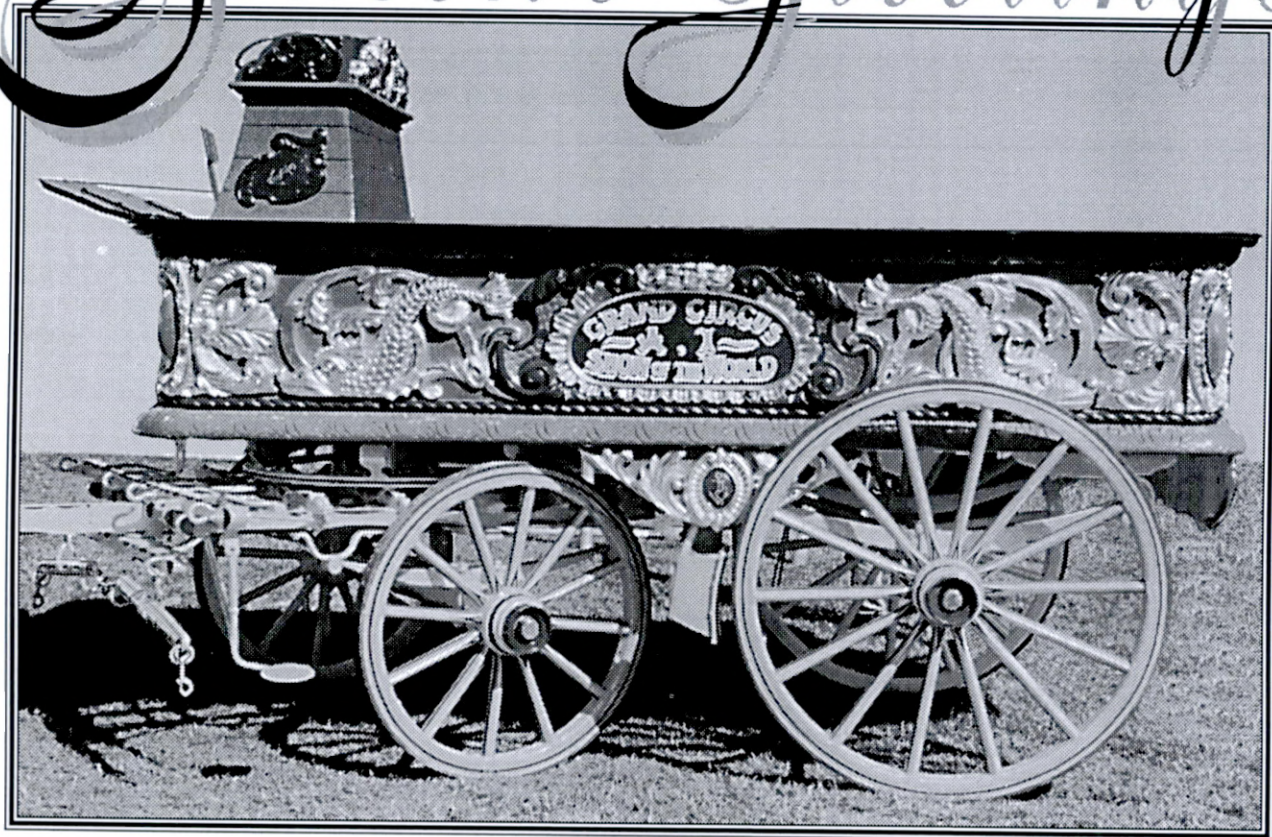
BACK ISSUES OF BANDWAGON

1966-Jan.-Feb.
1967-July-Aug., Nov.-Dec.
1968-All but Jan.-Feb.
1969-July-Aug., Sept.-Oct.
1970-All but July-Aug., Sept.-Oct.
1971-All but Mar.-Ap., May-June.
1972-All available.
1973-All but Nov.-Dec.
1974-All but Mar.-Ap., May-June.
1975-All available.
1976-All but Jan.-Feb., Nov.-Dec.
1977-All but Mar.-Ap.
1978-All available.
1979-All but Jan.-Feb.
1980-1986-All available.
1987-All but Nov.-Dec.
1988-1998-All available.

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BANDWAGON BACK ISSUES
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Season's Greetings



Royal Hanneford Band Tableau restored 1999



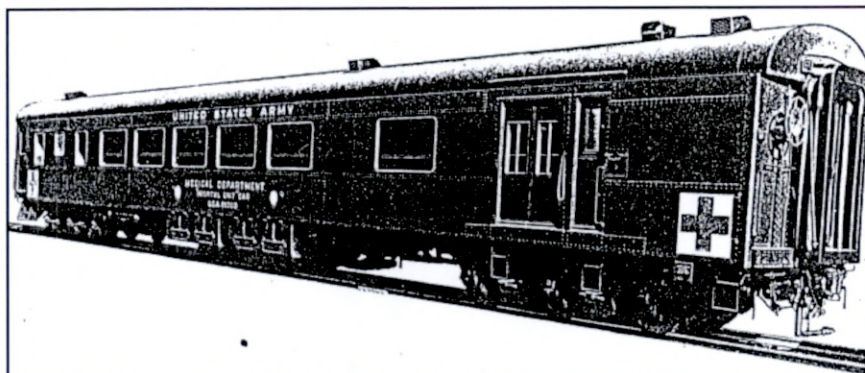
Baraboo and now the world... www.circusworldmuseum.com & www.circusparade.com

Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Coach History 1947-1956

By Robert S. MacDougall

Wartime shortages imposed difficult strains on the circus business. Perhaps the most dramatic effect of World War II was the scarcity of needed materials and a severe manpower shortage. Paradoxically, the war also offered the opportunity for Ringling-Barnum to replace its railroad coaches that had been in constant service since they were built at

Reproduction of Special Offering No. 1112 from War Assets Administration MG Hugh F. Foster, Jr. USA Ret.



Reproduction of official photo of car, Hospital Unit (89300-89399). MG Hugh F. Foster, Jr. USA Ret.

SURPLUS GOVERNMENT PROPERTY

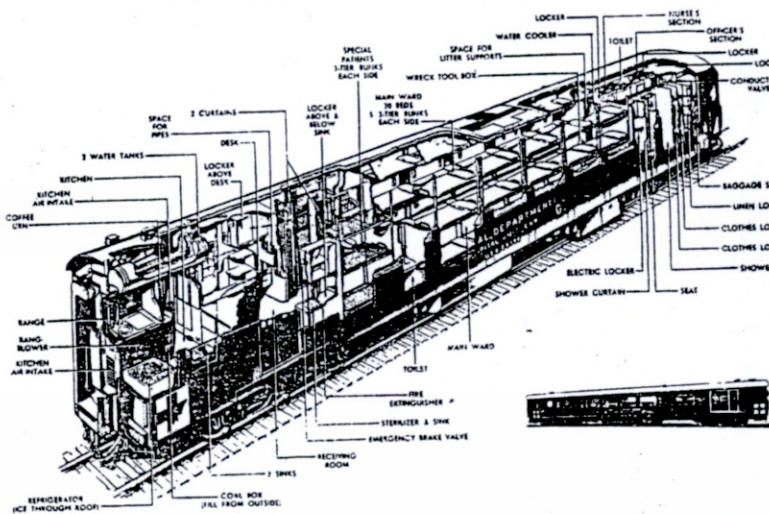
NEW YORK REGIONAL OFFICE
70 PINE STREET, NEW YORK 5, N. Y.

SPECIAL OFFERING FOR SALE BY WAR ASSETS ADMINISTRATION

SPECIAL OFFERING NO. K-1112
OCTOBER 28, 1946

Regional Office Reference No.	Quantity	Description and Location	Condition or Price
2671940-1-1	14	HOSPITAL RAILWAY CARS Sold "Where is" Arlington Yards, Staten Island, New York.	Used-Good

These modern Cars have been especially designed and built for maximum comfort. With air-conditioning, spacious windows, and a complete kitchen, they contain all the facilities of a complete Hospital on wheels.

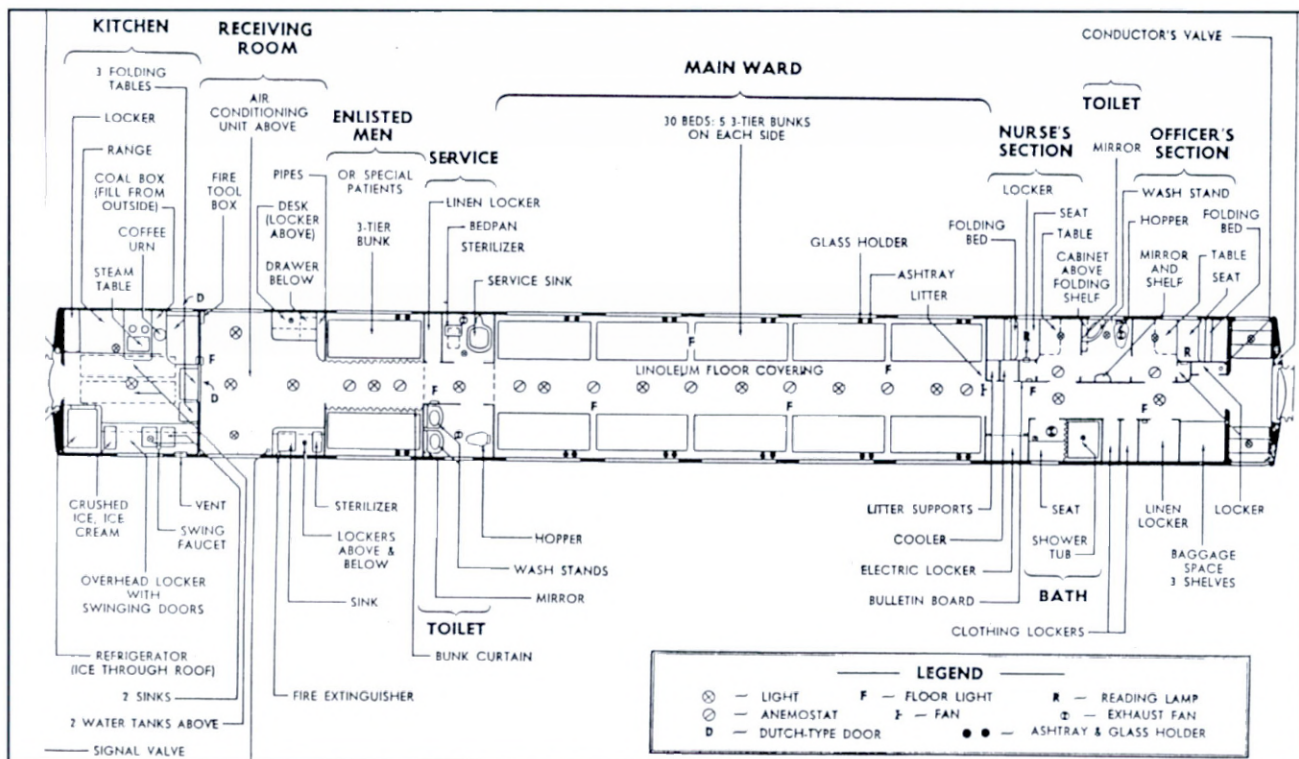


the turn of the century and in circus use since the early 1920s.

Behind the scenes soon after war's end lurked an ugly battle for control of the circus among John Ringling North, executor of his uncle John Ringling's estate; Edith Ringling, widow of Charles Ringling, and her son Robert; and Aubrey Ringling, widow of Richard Ringling, son of Alf T., and her husband James Haley.

The circus management changed during the war years. In 1943 it was under the direction of Robert Ringling, former opera singer and son of Charles Ringling, one of the founders of the show. Wartime shortages forced the circus to improvise. The armed forces had exclusive access to the only proven flame-retardant water proofing solvent for use on their canvas tent. Whatever the merits of alternative waterproofing treatments, there was no question what treatment the Ringling crewmen used, paraffin dissolved in gasoline applied with brooms, allowing the paraffin to penetrate the canvas as the gasoline evaporated, leaving the canvas waterproofed.

Two fires, the second of which



Reproduction of interior layout of 89300-89399 cars. MG Hugh F. Foster, Jr. USA Ret.

almost ruined the circus, occurred during the war. The menagerie fire in Cleveland in 1942 caused the loss of many animals that could not be replaced. The second catastrophic fire two years later on July 6, 1944 in Hartford, Connecticut totally destroyed the big top as 169 people lost their lives. The show sat on the Hartford lot, disabled and with everyone in shock. Investigations

Interior view of open ward area (military version) World War II hospital unit car. Author's collection.



over the next several days as well as legal attachments prevented the circus from moving. After several legal actions, the show was allowed to tear



down, moved its equipment to a railroad siding, load the train and depart for its Sarasota, Florida winter quarters.

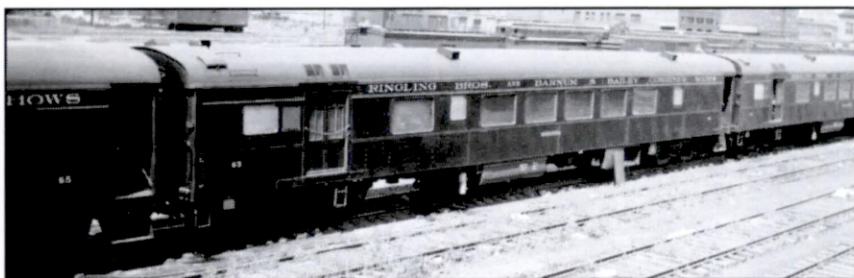
The results of the 1944 fire produced a landmark decision whereby the circus was put into court-supervised receivership that allowed the show to operate while paying off liability claims of several million dollars over a period of years. At war's end the circus continued to pay its liabilities

which limited the funds available for infrastructure replacement. The physical equipment was worn out and obsolete.

World War II hospital cars 89325 and 89343 in Ringling-Barnum winter quarters, Sarasota, Florida, 8 February 1947 Circus World Museum collection.

A continuing battle for control extended throughout the 1947 season among John North, Robert Ringling and his mother, and James Haley and his wife.

By 1946 the majority of Ringling-Barnum coaches had been in constant service since the early 1920s. Most of them had been built prior to 1910 and were of wooden construction reinforced with a steel under structure. The exception was John Ringling's private car Jomar, a steel car built for him by the Pullman



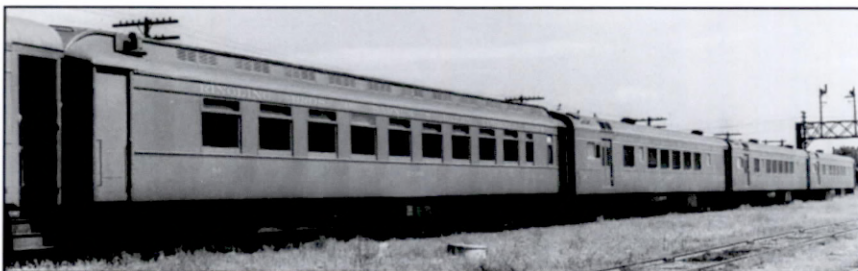
String of WW II hospital unit cars, car 63 Sarasota in 1947. Backstein photo.

Company in 1917. Wooden cars were particularly dangerous due to telescoping when interspersed among steel cars in a train.

In November 1946, North was made aware the War Assets Administration (WAA) was accepting bids to purchase groups of World War II hospital cars. The cars cost the government \$56,200 each when built by the American Car and Foundry Company in 1944. The layout of these cars was very similar to the World War I government medical department "unit cars" that had been in use since their purchase by Ringling-Barnum in 1922. Like the cars from World War I, the World War II hospital cars had three high beds on either side in the main compartment, plus two staterooms in one end and a kitchen in the opposite end. Most appealing was the fact these cars were only about three years old and some had seen very little service. This was a splendid opportunity for the circus to acquire nearly new railroad coaches. North and Haley felt the cars would be ideal for circus use. The need to replace the wooden coaches was paramount.

The following are excerpts from correspondence relating to the acquisition of the World War II hospital

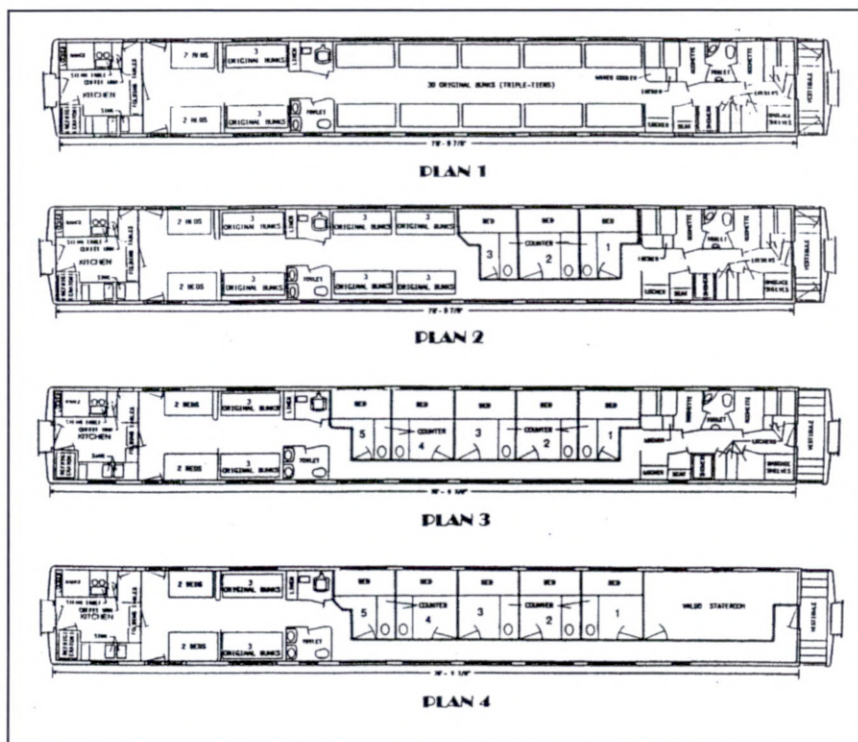
Car 84 Evanston in 1947, private car of Robert Ringling with hospital unit cars. Author's collection.



cars by Ringling-Barnum. It dates from November 7, 1946 to February 3, 1947 and involves John Ringling North, Executive Vice President of Ringling-Barnum; James A. Haley,

of many Ringling executives; Julius B. Schatz, attorney and counsel for Edward S. Rogin, receiver of the circus; and Robert P. Butler, attorney with Butler, Volpe & Garrity, a Hartford, Connecticut law firm which represented the Creditors Committee, a group formed in the fire's aftermath to oversee the circus and protect the interests of the fire's victims.

On November 7, 1946 Leonard Bisco wrote North that bidders had until November 18 to submit bids. He noted that the cars cost \$56,200 new.



President of Ringling-Barnum; Leonard G. Bisco, partner in the law firm of Newman & Bisco, attorney for John North, and general counsel for the John Ringling estate; Karl D. Loos, Washington D. C. attorney for Aubrey Haley and Edith Ringling; Melvin D. Hildreth, politically connected Washington D. C. attorney, major circus fan, and personal friend

Interior layout with circus modifications to World War II hospital cars. Plan 1 cars 55 and 59 through 64; Plan 2 car 56; Plan 3 cars 57, 58, 65 and 66; Plan 4 car 68. Drawn by MG Hugh F. Foster, Jr. USA Ret.

While some had recently been sold for \$53,000 each to the government-owned Alaska Railroad, he thought a realistic price was in the \$30,000 to \$35,000 range. The next day, Melvin Hildreth sent North a proposal describing 14 cars to be sold at Staten Island, New York on November 18, and 27 to be sold at Oakland, California. He noted that a previous bid of \$13,800 was refused.

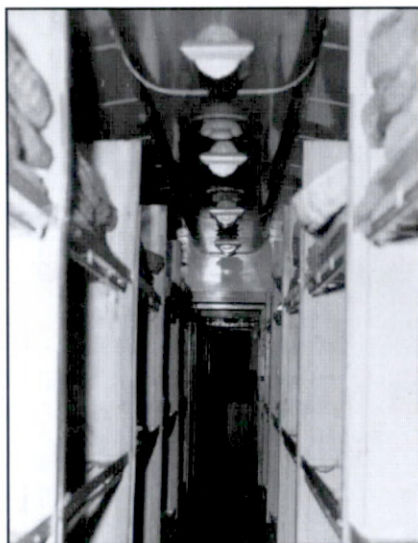
On November 13, Bisco wrote Julius B. Schatz to persuade him to

support the purchase of the cars. He emphasized the hazards of continuing to use the old coaches, and noted management's fear that "there is a very real danger of a serious accident." Therefore the circus needed 30 new coaches. He noted the War Assets Administration would help finance the purchase and expressed the hope that only a 20% down payment would be required. The show's idea was to pay cash for the 14 cars on Staten Island, and finance the ones in Oakland with a maximum cash outlay of \$260,000, based on paying about \$15,000 per car.

The next day, Haley wrote Bisco from Waycross, Georgia, stating that 25 rather than 30 cars were needed. He further noted that "a great deal of other equipment ... must be replaced in order to continue the operation of the show," specifying the need for "at least three heavy trucks," and Case tractors. He also mentioned a recent Interstate Commerce Commission ruling that required all railroad cars to change to A-B brakes before 1948, a further expense for the show.

North wrote Bisco the same day, quoting to him a wire from Hildreth stating the 20% down payment with a chattel mortgage of five years at 4% interest had been accepted. He also said the show could prepay the mortgage and the monthly payment would be \$6600. He concluded the wire: "Believe at price cars are yours. Utmost cooperation here." It looked like all the cars were going into the circus business.

On November 27 Bisco wrote Schatz, telling him the show bid on 25 cars, obtaining all fourteen available in New York for \$15,000 each; however, the same amount on the eleven cars in San Francisco was not enough. After acknowledging the possibility that the show might still obtain the San Francisco cars because the government was not obligated to accept the highest bid, Bisco noted that another sale of eighteen cars would take place in Seattle in the next two or three weeks at which time the show would be able to bid on eleven or sixteen more cars. His next sentence, which he underlined for emphasis, reflected the constraints the circus operated under while trying to pay



Interior view of remodeling done during winter of 1947-1948. Looking toward vestibule end. Two man beds, three high. Author's collection.

off the claims from the Hartford fire: "Each of the bids was expressly conditioned on our being able to work out satisfactory arrangements with the Creditors Committee." As part of the litigation stemming from the fire, a committee representing the fire's victims was formed to monitor the finances of the circus.

Bisco then told of a "very interesting proposal" from the War Assets Administration. The WAA would lease the cars to the show on the basis of one and a half cents per mile with the circus having the option to purchase the cars at any time for \$15,000, with all previous rental payments being credited toward the purchase price. The lease would run for at least five years. Based on the conservative mileage estimate of 15,000 per season, the rent for each car would be only \$225 a year plus the necessary \$80 per car insurance. For fourteen cars the total expense would be \$4270; for 25, \$7625; and for 30,

\$9150. "These charges, I think the Committee will agree, are infinitesimal compared to the benefit to the corporation and its creditors." The WAA wanted a quick answer if the rental agreement was satisfactory. Bisco concluded the letter by asking Schatz to take the matter up with the committee as soon as possible.

Robert Butler, representing the Creditors Committee, wrote Bisco on December 5 with good news: "The Committee is unanimously of the opinion that this is a very favorable transaction for the circus and that the advantage in circus operation that may be expected from the purchase and use of this type of car will greatly outweigh this nominal operating cost as set forth in your letter. I am glad, therefore, to give you this evidence of the Committee's unanimous approval of the plan as you set it forth and I hope you will be able to put the deal through satisfactorily."

Bisco wrote Haley on December 9 with the story of how the Creditors Committee accepted the rental agreement. The Committee had turned down the initial proposal to buy the cars outright because "it would take money which they thought the creditors ought to have." He noted that the Committee then accepted the rental idea. Bisco said he was in touch with the legal department of the WAA which was at the time preparing the papers for the agreement. It was to apply only to the 14 cars in New York, but there would soon be other sales at which the show could bid for 11 or 16 more cars. North was pushing to rent 16, but Bisco wanted to talk to Haley about this in person.

On December 17 Hildreth wrote Haley that eighteen hospital cars

New advertising car No. 1 billing Appleton, Wisconsin for August 11, 1949. Steve Flint photo.



were going to be sold in Seattle on January 9, 1947, and that the show should have its bids filed by January 8. The next day he sent Haley the bid forms. Good news followed on January 13, 1947 when Hildreth sent Haley the following telegram: "We were successful bidders Seattle sale. Awarded 11 cars at \$15,000 each."

Bisco wrote North on January 23, 1947 to bring him up to date on the cars. The deal, Bisco said, was a "combination rental and purchase agreement spreading over 5 years." Until the Hartford creditors were paid off, the lease would be on the basis of 4% interest, 7 1/2% depreciation and a cent and a half rent per mile. After the fire claims were settled, the circus had to pay 15% down, less all the previously payments with the exception of interest. Equal monthly payments would be made over the next five years, after which the show would completely own the cars.

Bisco continued by saying he didn't know how many cars the show would end up with. He noted that it won the bidding for the fourteen New York cars and lost it on the eleven in San Francisco. Then, "while we were negotiating the terms with the government officials in Washington," Haley began to get cold feet about the cars value and adaptability for circus use and he began to doubt "whether we should bid for any more cars." After word was received of the January 9 sale in Seattle, "Haley was not even going to put in a bid even though this lot was supposed to be the last that would ever be sold." Bisco, apparently with some effort, persuaded him to put in a bid for eleven more cars at \$15,000 each with the right to reject the cars if they were not suitable for circus use.

The bid carried the day, "although we really had no right to make such a condition, the government officials have given us a reasonable time to decide, after seeing the cars, whether we want to take them." The New York cars would arrive in Sarasota the next day, at which time the show could look them over. If Haley "decides they are all right," the eleven Seattle cars would soon be headed to Florida. The contract with the government had been worked



Line up of thirteen 4th section coaches in Los Angeles, California in 1949. Author's collection.

out, and would soon need the approval of the Executive Committee of the circus.

On January 30, 1947, Haley wrote Karl D. Loos, attorney for Edith Ringling and Aubrey Haley, bringing him up to date on the recent transaction by sending a copy of the payment schedule and the agreement between the show and the WAA. "I think that we have made a very fine deal," Haley wrote. The cars would last for the next thirty to forty years. "Mr. Norman Call, President of the R. F. & P. Railroad was down the other day and you might be interested in his comments. He stated that no railroad in the United States at the present moment had equipment that would anything like compare with this equipment, that it was the finest obtainable. He further added that no circus before had had nor would any circus in the future ever be able to obtain equipment of this kind at such a ridiculously low price." Haley was trying to get the support Edith Ringling, a major stockholder in the circus.

Haley continued by stating that all the cars might not go into service in 1947. The total yearly payment on the twenty-five cars was \$48,375, and the rental amount would be applied to the purchase price once the Hartford claims were settled. He noted that the yearly rent could increase if the show traveled more

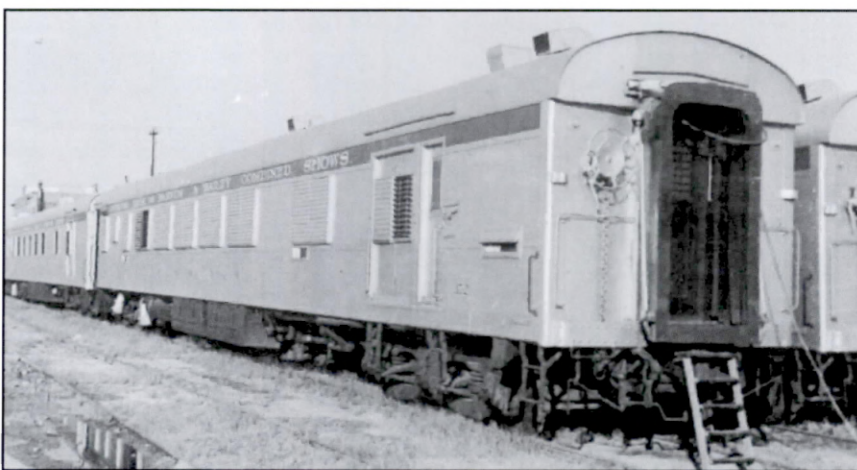
than the estimated 14,000 miles atone and a half cents a mile on which the rent was based.

On January 31, 1947 Haley received a wire from Hildreth: "If you would like 5 more cars in addition to 25 War Assets, will sell same condition, same price. Haley responded the same day by telling Hildreth that the show was having some trouble converting the cars for circus use, and thought it better to wait until they knew what the conversion costs were before committing on others. He did, however, want to know how long the five cars would be available. Hildreth wrote back on February 3, saying he told a Mr. Barton, presumably an official with the WAA, that the show would get back to him once the conversion expense was ascertained.

The story of the cars broke in the February 1, 1947 *Billboard*: "Big one gets 14 air-conditioned 82-foot sleepers.

"Fleet of 14 show-owned, air-conditioned sleeping cars, the first in the history of show biz, arrived in

Car 372 St. Louis, right side. Note openings just below windows and double louver window inserts. W. H. B. Jones photo.



Sarasota on January 24 at winter quarters of the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus.

"Unused hospital cars, each 82 feet long, were purchased from the U. S. government. They will be remodeled to meet circus requirements, according to James A. Haley, circus president, and will replace most of the old sleeping cars on the Big One.

"Built by American Car & Foundry Company, the cars were brought from New York, where Tommy Thomas, show's traffic manager, had arranged for their departure. Circus also holds option on an additional 11 cars, which are now on the West Coast."

The process of getting the show ready for the 1947 season was slightly different because of the acquisition of the hospital cars. The late January arrival of the first fourteen cars cut the time short for making any major alterations.

The February 22, 1947 *Billboard* noted: "R-B prep work on schedule . . . Dressing up new train. The train crew was busy working on the 14 new all-steel, air-conditioned hospital cars recently purchased from the Army. One of these cars would be ideal for the advance, as the kitchen would make an excellent paste room and the doctor's office could readily be converted for the use of the car manager. However, this is not the plan at present as the No. 1 bill car is in the shop and is about ready for the road."

If the Seattle cars left there on or just after February 28, they would have arrived in Sarasota very close to the departure date of the show for New York City. A few of the cars had staterooms added in what was once the open ward area that contained

NYC steam engines spotting coaches in 1947. Car next to caboose is car 48 Kansas. Gene Baxter photo.



three high bunks on either side of the cars. The majority of the cars had four additional beds installed in the receiving area. These cars had beds for 42 people. Building materials were in short supply, which, combined with the time available, kept remodeling to a minimum.

Twenty-five cars were acquired in two groups. The first fourteen cars to arrive in quarters were numbered 55 through 68, and became part of the fourth section. Cars 55 and 59 through 64 received very few modifications other than the addition of a few more berths. Car 56 had three staterooms installed, and cars 57, 58, 65, and 66 had five new staterooms each. Car 67 was made into a private car for the Haleys. Car 68 had five staterooms and the roomette end of the car was given to Pat Valdo. The second group of eleven cars was numbered 38 through 48. They were part of the second section. Minimal work was done on them because of their late arrival in winter quarters.

There was little time to do more than paint them in the show's red color scheme that had been used since 1943. With limited time to make modifications, thirteen of the older cars were kept in service.

The 1947 coach numbering system was pretty straight forward, with the old-style cars retaining their numbers. The new cars were numbered consecutively in two groups.

The car names were a totally different story. Many old car names were used on the cars, along with new state and city names. To further confuse the issue, some old cars received new names and others had no name. Only two of the new cars, numbers 56 and 67, the latter Haley's private car, went unnamed. Other private cars were the Jomar and Evanston. Cheyenne, number 93, looked like a private car, which it had been during the mid-1930s. In

1946 and 1947 the Cheyenne had a Delco light plant installed in the observation end and had its remaining space made into five staterooms. This car served as the "motor car," supplying electrical power to the fourth section coaches.

The first fourteen cars went into the train consist for New York City, and were ready to roll by late March. The private cars Jomar and Evanston were joined by Haley's new private car, No. 67. Cheyenne provided electrical power for the coaches heading to New York. Additional old-style coaches from the first, second and third sections went with the New York train to house the personnel in the animal, prop, wardrobe, train, and truck departments. Although a train lay out is not available, it is reasonable to assume the old-style coaches housed the working men.

Meanwhile, the second group of eleven hospital cars was being readied for the opening canvas stand at Philadelphia on May 23-31. All eleven went into the second section. Minimal modifications were made to these cars. Four bunks were added to the receiving area, raising the capacity to forty-two. A comment was made in *Billboard* that if the 30" wide berths were not changed, it would be a great break for the working men as it would mean the end of doubling up in the berths.

My analysis of the coaches taken to New York, based on the Frank McClosky papers at Circus World Museum, indicates the following 25 cars were split in two sections:

No. 55. Former hospital car for 42 band members with 11 extra beds.

No. 56. Former hospital car for 27 side show people with 9 extra beds.

No. 57. Former hospital car for 22 performers.

No. 58. Former hospital car for 22 performers.

No. 59. Former hospital car for 42 staff, ticket sellers, front door men.

No. 60. Former hospital car for 42 performers.

No. 61. Former hospital car for 42 performers.

No. 62. Former hospital car for 42 performers.

No. 63. Former hospital car for 42 performers.

No. 64. Former hospital car for 42 performers.

No. 65. Former hospital car for 22 performers.

No. 66. Former hospital car for 22 performers.

No. 67. Former hospital car, James Haley's private car.

No. 68. Former hospital car for 22 performers.

No. 70. Animal men and train crew.

No. 71. Bosses, truck drivers, time keepers, commissary men.

No. 74. For 60 prop and wardrobe personnel.

No. 78. Ring stock men.

No. 79. Elephant men and space for motor car.

No. 84. Evanston, the private car of Mrs. Charles Ringling, may not have been on train.

No. 89. Side show band and extra beds.

No. 90. For 40 performers.

No. 91. For 40 performers.

No. 92. Jomar private car for John Ringling North.

No. 93. Cheyenne car with state-rooms and space for motor car.

The Advance Car No. 1 also usually went north with the New York train.

The second group of eleven hospital cars along with five more of the old-style coaches, a total of sixteen cars, went to Philadelphia in late May for the start of the tenting season. When the New York and Philadelphia trains were combined the coach consist totaled 41.

Coaches arriving in Philadelphia with the canvas were:

No. 38. Former hospital car for tractor department.

No. 39. Former hospital car for wardrobe department.

No. 40. Former hospital car for light department.

No. 41. Former hospital car for train department.

No. 42. Former hospital car for property department, had extra space.

No. 43. Former hospital car for property department, had extra space.

No. 44. Former hospital car for white canvas men.

No. 45. Former hospital car for white canvas men.

No. 46. Former hospital car for black canvas men.



No. 47. Former hospital car for black canvas men.

No. 48. Former hospital car for black canvas men.

No. 72. Cookhouse department.

No. 73. Cookhouse department.

No. 76. Bosses and elephant men.

No. 77. 24 berths and one state-room for bosses, with extra space.

No. 81. Side show and space for motor car.

The 1947 season started its canvas tour on 108 railroad cars and carried approximately 1,500 people. A complete layout of all 41 coaches showing the number of beds, roomettes and staterooms and who was assigned to them, excluding the private cars, was in the George W. Smith's collection in the Pfening Archives.

First section

No. M70 Montana

No. 71 no name

No. 72 no name

No. 73 no name

No. 74 no name

Second section

No. 38 Alabama

No. 39 Maryland

No. 40 Nebraska

No. 41 Wisconsin

No. 42 Florida

No. 43 Illinois

No. 44 Idaho

No. 45 Ohio

No. 46 Utah

No. 47 Nevada

No. 48 Kansas

No. M81 Arizona

No. 76 no name

No. 77 no name

Third section

No. 78 no name*

No. M79 New Jersey

No. 90 no name

No. 91 Oregon

Fourth section

No. 89 Maine

No. 55 Pittsburgh

No. 56 no name

No. 57 Portland

No. 58 Birmingham

1949 view of private car 84 Caledonia Mrs. Charles Ringling's car. Note: Double louver window inserts, similar to car 66/372 St. Louis. The third car in the string is Cheyenne, motor car on 4th section and fourth car in string is Jomar private car. Circus World Museum collection.

No. 59 San Antonio

No. 60 Washington

No. 61 Seattle

No. 62 Los Angeles

No. 63 Sarasota

No. 64 Worcester*

No. 65 New York

No. 66 St. Louis

No. 67 Private car Haley

No. 68 Louisville

No. 84 Evanston, private car

No. 92 Jomar, private car

No. M93 Cheyenne

No. M (motor car) electrical power

*Cut from show at Chicago.

The fight for control of the show continued throughout the season and did not appear to bother operations, but surely must have created unrest among the top management. Some cars were cut from the train during the August 2-10 Chicago engagement. The Tom Parkinson papers at Circus World Museum indicate seven cars left Chicago for Sarasota on August 10. Others dispute the figure, saying eight cars were cut. The McClosky papers show coaches No. 77, 78, and 64 were sent to Florida at that time. It appears from the George Smith papers that personnel from these cars were absorbed into the extra berths on the cars that stayed on the show.

One of the three cars returned to quarters was a new hospital car, No. 64, Worcester. It became the new advertising car in 1948. *Billboard* had hinted earlier in the year that the new cars would make excellent advance cars, and it appears the necessary time to convert the car was now available.

The Tom Parkinson notes and

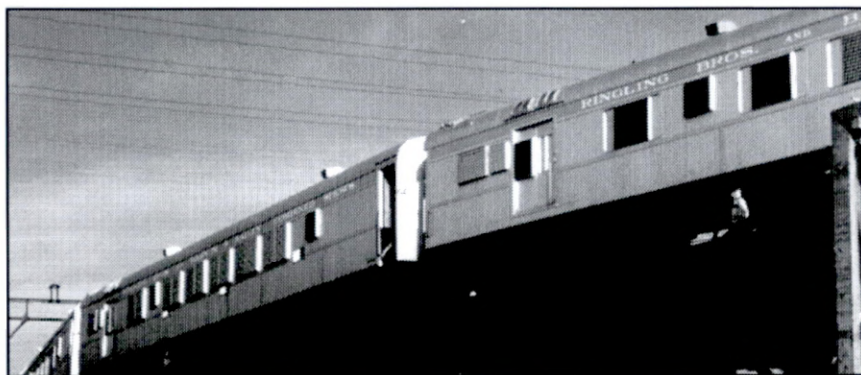
Billboard both noted the failure to procure ice for the air conditioning system on the new cars led to the breaking of many of the large solid glass windows as show hands attempted to get some relief from the intense summer heat. By the time of October and November dates in Tennessee, Virginia and the Carolinas, regrets were voiced about the missing windows as cold fall winds whipped through the cars.

By 1947 the behind-the-scenes struggle for control of the circus was resolved. John Ringling North acquired 51% of the show's stock, and thus controlling interest. At the October 27-28 stand in Atlanta, Haley departed the show in his private car. North announced that Arthur M. Concello was the new general manager, replacing George W. Smith. Concello had played an important role in North's take over, and was a major influence on show operations in the future.

The show entered Florida at Jacksonville on November 14-15. Two 300+ mile jumps took the company south to Miami, then northwest to St. Petersburg. A short move across the bay to Tampa followed. The November 23 date in Sarasota finished the season. Ringling-Barnum moved on the largest number of railway cars ever used by a circus. It was a most successful tour.

Considerable work was scheduled over the winter at the Sarasota quarters. The hospital cars' interiors were remodeled and the huge glass windows on the sides were replaced by a

Car 372 St. Louis, left side. Note: Openings just below windows and double louver window inserts. Howard Tibbals collection.



louver type window, making their appearance in 1948 somewhat different from the previous year.

Concello brought several of his key people from the Clyde Beatty Circus to Ringling-Barnum for the 1948 season. Frank McClosky, Concello's right hand man on Beatty, became the assistant manager, a position formerly held by Ed Kelly. Willis Lawson from the Beatty concession department became McClosky's assistant.

The first of many changes in the physical equipment and operations was new steel grandstand wagons designed by Concello and built by the Lewis Diesel Company of Memphis, Tennessee, and the reduction in the big top's length by 100 feet. Both changes reduced the manpower to move the show, and consequently the number of coaches dropped from 38 at the end of the 1947 season to 27 at the 1948 under canvas opening.

Remodeling the hospital cars' interiors and deactivating the air-conditioning system by installing louver type windows took many man-hours by the train department. Lawson told the author in an interview that Concello put him in charge of overseeing the installation of the windows. The main windows were louvered in the center with part of the glass left on either side. Smaller windows had their radius squared and were totally filled by the new louvered window insert. This louvering of the windows gave the cars a distinctive look and remained on them through their final use in 1972.

The majority, if not all, of the workmen's cars had the one man military bunks removed, and angle iron frame beds with wooden bulk heads separating them were installed in two and three high arrangements with two men to a bed. This more

than doubled the capacity of each car. Some cars were brought up to the 100 plus beds of the old cars. No layout of the performers' cars has been found but it is a safe assumption that the bed capacity was increased in some of these cars as well. The number of coaches on the fourth section was reduced from 17 to 14, but they accommodated about the same number of performers as 1947.

The hospital car sent back to Sarasota from Chicago in 1947 was made into the new advertising car for 1948. It continued in service through the 1955 season. It was called the Worcester and numbered 64 in 1947. The Louisville, numbered 68 in 1947, was renumbered 64 for the 1948 season. James Haley's vacated private car was taken over by Mrs. Charles Ringling. It was renumbered 84 and given the name Caledonia, the name and number of previous private cars used by Mr. and Mrs. Charles Ringling. The final car effected on the fourth section was car number 63, the Sarasota, which was moved to the second section.

The eleven hospital cars in the second section in 1947 were split between the first, second and third sections in 1948. Considerable shuffling of names and numbers took place, based on lists in the McClosky papers. Car 41's number became 43; 42 became 45; 43 became 41 with a name change; Connecticut, number 44, stayed the same; car 45 became 42 with a name change; Nevada, number 46, stayed the same; the seventh car on the second section became the Sarasota, number 63, in the fourth section. Cars number 47 and 48 were moved to the third section. McClosky's records show car number 48 containing a light plant to provide power for the two third section coaches. The list further shows three cars making up the first section. Car number 38 had its name changed to Indiana, and cars number 39 and 40 stayed the same. Surprisingly there is no mention of the car that became known as the Texas car, number 37. It had been the 1947 advertising car and was remodeled into a laundry and dry cleaning car. It remained in service through 1955.

The McClosky data contains one

more unsolved mystery. There is no mention of car number 55, Pittsburgh. This would have been the twenty-fourth hospital car in the 1948 consist and its presence or absence determines if there were 26 or 27 coaches on the show. The 1949 McClosky list indicates 27 coaches.

After the hospital cares were customized inside and out, they were given a silver streamlined paint scheme that coincided with John Ringling North's plans to modernize the appearance of the show.

The February 14, 1948 *Billboard* contained an ad offering the old wooden coaches for sale: "Circus RR cars for sale. Several 76-foot sleepers, 70-foot stock cars and a few flat cars. Also considerable fine wardrobe and several different type wagons of open and closed design with hard rubber and pneumatic tires. Communicate with Frank McClosky W. Q. Sarasota, Florida."

The circus received two responses to the ad. The first was from the James E. Strates carnival which bought two stateroom cars on February 21, 1948. One was the former Hagenbeck-Wallace advance car which was the Florence Nightingale car on Ringling-Barnum in 1937 and was later named the Sarasota and numbered 87. The other car was the Los Angeles.

The Clyde Beatty Circus was the other buyer. In early 1948 the Beatty show bought car number 74, Illinois, a workingmen's sleeper on the first section and just retired from the road. The documentation for both transactions is in the Ringling-Barnum archives at Circus World Museum.

By March 1948 winter quarters activity increased with daily rehearsals for the new show underway and the readying of the equipment for the show's opening in New York City on April 7. As in the past, the show traveled north in two sections. The following is the list of coaches going to New York from a March 15 list in the McClosky papers:



Ringling-Barnum winter quarters 1955 conversion of car 84 Caledonia into car 367 Bridgeport, right side. Hertzberg collection.

- No. M39 Animal men.
- No. 42. Bosses and assistants.
- No. 43. Property men and wardrobe men.
- No. 45. Train crew, truck drivers and truck helpers.
- No. 48. Ring stock men and elephant men.
- No. 40. Black workingmen.
- No. 56. Performers.
- No. 57. Performers.
- No. 59. Performers.
- No. 60. Performers.
- No. 61. Performers.
- No. 62. Performers.
- No. 64. Performers.
- No. 65. Performers.
- No. 66. Concello's private car.
- No. 92. Jomar, private car.
- No. M93. Staterooms, performers.

The new No. 1 advance car was also on the consist to New York. The number 55 car was missing from the list, but made the run to Madison Square Garden.

Work crews under McClosky's direction put the finishing touches on the remaining coaches. Living space for McClosky was provided in car number 41, Connecticut. Work was completed on the new Caledonia car for Mrs. Charles Ringling. The remaining cars were on the canvas train that headed for Washington, D. C. for the May 18 outdoor opening. While the McClosky lists are inconclusive about the exact car consists going to both New York and

Washington, the total number of 26 coaches agrees with Joe Bradbury's published 1948 consist with 23 rather than 24 being the new hospital cars.

The following is a list of coaches by section at the start of the 1948 canvas tour.

First Section

- 37. Texas
- 38. Indiana
- M39. Maryland
- 40. Nebraska

Second Section

- 41. Connecticut
- 42. Nevada

- 43. Wisconsin
- 44. Idaho
- 45. Florida
- M46. Utah
- 63. Sarasota

Third Section

- 47. Kansas
- M48. Ohio

Fourth Section

- 56. New Orleans
- 57. Portland
- 58. Birmingham
- 59. San Antonio
- 60. Washington
- 61. Seattle
- 62. Los Angeles
- 64. Louisville
- 65. Little Rock
- 66. St. Louis
- 84. Caledonia
- 92. Jomar
- M93. Cheyenne

After a most successful run in both Madison Square and the Boston Gardens, optimism ran high for continued strong business under canvas. What followed was a tour that took the show to the West Coast where it had not been since 1941. A phenomenal engagement at San Francisco's Cow Palace and numerous stands in southern California continued to produce big business. The show headed east, playing the southwest, Texas, and the southeast. Early November was spent in Tennessee and the Carolinas but only two Georgia towns were visited, Atlanta and Columbus. A 300 mile jump into Florida at Jacksonville was followed by another three hundred miler to West Palm Beach with the finale coming at Miami from November

25th to 28h. Following a 293-mile run into the Sarasota winter quarters, the curtain came down on what Frank Braden in the route book called a "spectacular" coast to coast tour.

The winter of 1948-1949 saw continued effort by Concello and his staff to improve and refine operations, as well as to replace equipment. Eight additional mechanical seat wagons were ordered with some reworking of existing units taking place to improve their use. The new big top's shape was altered slightly to accommodate the new seat wagons in the general admission section. The menagerie was given a completely new look with a jungle motif. Twelve new cage wagons were added. Ten new 72-foot flat cars were ordered from the Thrall Car Company.

Only one minor change was made to the coaches by the addition of the 24th hospital car that was put in the fourth section. The total number of coaches on the show was 27. An interesting detail revealed in the McClosky papers is that the ten new Thrall flats were not all delivered to the show at Sarasota before the beginning of the under canvas season. A complete train list dated May 28, 1949 from McClosky to agent Waldo Tupper showed the following: First Section, 16 flats, four coaches, total of 20 cars; Second section: 19 flats, 1 stock, 7 coaches, total of 27 cars; Third section, 16 flats, 7 stocks, 2 coaches, total of 25 cars; Fourth section, 2 stock, 14 coaches, total of 16 cars; one advance car ahead of show.

The totals were 51 flats, 10 stocks, 27 coaches, 1 advance car for a total of 89 cars. A note stated that one flat was added to the second section at Baltimore, making a 90 car train. Addition notes show that eight Thrall flats, numbered 100, 102, 103, 104, 106, RBX7, and RBX8, were added to the second section. Flats RBX9 and RBX 10 were added to the third section.

Although it does not appear on any of McClosky's lists, the 27th coach had to be car number 55, Pittsburgh. This became the "motor car" on the fourth section in

1950. In 1949, the Cheyenne was still the motor car on the fourth section coaches. The photograph of the fourth section's 14 cars in Los Angeles in 1949 shows the old-style cars Jomar and Cheyenne, and a third old-style car, Texas, was the laundry and dry cleaning car on the first section. Other private cars were Concello's St. Louis, number 66, and Mrs. Ringling's Caledonia, number 84. Both were hospital cars.

The following lists the coaches by section at the start of the 1949 under-canvas tour:

First Section

No. 37. Texas
No. 38. Indiana
No. M39. Maryland
No. 40. Nebraska

Second Section

No. 41. Connecticut
No. 42. Nevada
No. 43. Wisconsin
No. 44. Idaho
No. 45. Florida
No. M46. Utah
No. 47. Sarasota

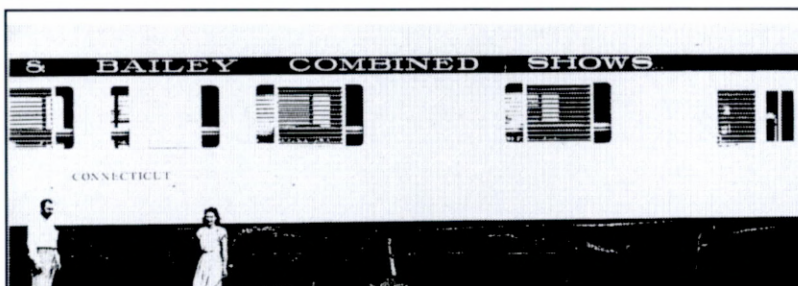
Third Section

No. 48. Kansas
No. M49. Ohio

Fourth Section

No. 55. Pittsburgh
No. 56. New Orleans
No. 57. Portland
No. 58. Birmingham
No. 59. San Antonio
No. 60. Washington
No. 61. Seattle
No. 62. Los Angeles
No. 64. Louisville
No. 65. Little Rock
No. 66. St. Louis
No. 84. Caledonia
No. 92. Jomar

1948 view of newly remodeled and freshly painted car 41, Connecticut. Frank and Fanny McClosky are standing beside car. Circus World Museum collection.



No. M93. Cheyenne

The show made another coast to coast tour in 1949. A slight recession near season's end caused the final revenue to be slightly off the mark set the previous year. The Ringling-Barnum Circus was at its maximum size in number of railroad cars used. In 1950 the number was reduced and in 1951, it was reduced still further.

The year 1950 started on a sad note when Robert Ringling died on January 2. A report on the Hartford fire claims revealed a balance of \$660,000 till due out of claims totaling \$3,000,000.

The ever increasing cost of moving the 90 car train had become too much of a burden. Concello and North were at odds about cutting the size of the train. The 1950 season saw a ten car reduction to 79 cars back and one advance car ahead for a total of 80 cars. A study of the 1950 consist shows little if any space was lost for performers or workingmen. Two private cars, Jomar and Caledonia, were left in winter quarters. Motor car Cheyenne was dropped and motors were installed in car number 55, Pittsburgh, for power to the fourth section. The 1950 train was still in four sections, with the only difference in the coaches being 11 of them in the fourth section instead of 14 as in 1949. The coaches took on a shiny look with a new silver paint job.

Although the 1950 Ringling-Barnum route book was the first to list the train makeup, only the car numbers are given, and only one private car is listed, Art Concello's 66. The coach makeup from the route book: First section, cars 38, 39, 40, 37; Second section, cars 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47; Third section, cars 48, 49; Fourth section, cars 60, 58, 62, 64, 66, 55, 65, 57, 61, 59, 56; a total of 24 coaches. The emergency contacts for each section were: First section,

Lloyd Morgan, car 38; Second Section, Frank McClosky, car 41; Third section, Willis Lawson, car 49; and Fourth section, Arthur Concello, car 66.

No information has been found on the train consist

going to New York for the Madison Square Garden opening on April 5. The 1950 under canvas tour started in Baltimore instead of Washington. Canada and New England were also on the schedule. When the show had a travel day on June 11 between Newark, New Jersey and Westbury, Long Island, the coaches and circus personnel traveled from Newark via the Hudson River tubes, through Penn Station under the East River to the Sunnyside yards in Queens. The Long Island Railroad delivered the coaches to Mineola, five miles from the Westbury lot. The show's 48 flats and 7 stock cars were floated across the Hudson River from Greenville, New Jersey to Bay Ridge, New York where the Long Island Railroad picked them up for delivery to Mineola. This may have been the first time the Ringling-Barnum circus train passed through Pennsylvania Station, a practice still in use today.

The October 7, 1950 *Billboard* carried an article headlined: "Ringling to drop 20 cars. Will eliminate animal top, move in two sections in 1951 due to high railroad rates. Cages to be in big top, cut in elephant herd expected."

"Work on the movie, *The Greatest Show on Earth* will be done in quarters and the show is scheduled to complete one of the most complete face-lifting jobs in its history as it reorganizes for its 1951 edition."

That winter was indeed one of the most active in the show's history. Filming schedules ran into March, further filming curtailed through the New York City engagement. Some scenes were shot in Philadelphia and Washington. The Jomar was taken along to the first canvas stands. After the road filming was completed, the Jomar was sent back to winter quarters. The plan to knock 20 cars from the train was scuttled, but the train was reduced by 10 cars, resulting in a 70 car show with lower expenses and less total cost from the higher railroad rates.

In an interesting side note, *The Greatest Show on Earth* shows wrecked coaches along with other equipment in the big wreck scene that is one of the high points of the film. At the end of March three flats carrying eight baggage wagons and



two seat wagons were sent to Hollywood for the scene. No coaches were involved even though they seemed to be present on the sound stage for the close ups using the full sized equipment. One inch scale model railroad cars and wagons were used to film the wreck scene. The author and Howard Tibbals own the majority of these models today. They show extensive damage caused during the filming. None of the real railroad cars suffered damage or loss.

Two other significant events occurred after the 1950 season. In December 1950 the final claims from the Hartford fire were paid. The 676 claims totaled \$3,036,355. More of the old style pre-1947 coaches were disposed of during the winter of 1950-1951. The Clyde Beatty Circus and the James E. Strates Shows and the Dodson Imperial Shows, the latter two carnivals, had purchased some of them. Jimmie Gardner bought fifteen, eleven of which were moved to land just outside the winter quarters where the running gears were removed, and the cars set on concrete block foundations for remodeling into duplex style efficiency apartments. A few of the remaining retired coaches were used for storage around the winter quarters.

The rail car line up for 1951 was 41 flats, 5 stocks, and 23 coaches, 69 cars back and one advance for a total of 70 cars. The show carried 24 coaches for the first two under-canvas stands as the Jomar toured with the company. The train moved in three sections rather than the usual four. The first section carried three stocks, 15 flats and four coaches. The second section had two stocks, 18 flats and eight coaches. The third section carried eight flats and 11 coaches.

The 23 coaches on the 1951 train were one less than in 1950. The miss-

Car 92 Jomar, private car in 1947. The following year louvered window inserts were installed. Gene Baxter photo.

ing car on the second section was confusing because the combined second and third section coaches in 1950 was nine. It is unknown which workingmen's car was left in quarters. The 1951 Ringling-Barnum route book failed to include the train make up.

Sarasota hosted the debut of Cecil B. DeMille's film *The Greatest Show on Earth* in late January 1952. Concello denied the rumor that the size of the train would be reduced again, and it remained 70 cars. The color scheme was the same; however, a different numbering system was put into effect. All cars for the first section were numbered in the 100's, the second section in the 200's, and the third in the 300's.

In April the Interstate Commerce Commission granted the railroads another rate increase which, together with boosts put in place the prior fall, jumped move rates by circuses and carnivals by 15%. The canvas train headed for Washington for the first tented engagement from May 20 to 25.

The following is a list of the coaches used in 1951 and 1952 showing the numbering changes:

First section 1951 and 1952

No. 38 to 121

No. M39 to M122

No. 40 to 123

No. 37 to 124

Second section 1951 and 1952

No. 41 to 247

No. 42 to 248

No. 45 to 249

No. M47 to M250

No. 44 to 251

No. 46 to 252



No. 48 to 253
Third section 1951 and 1952
No. 56 to 365
No. 59 to 366
No. 61 to 367
No. 60 to 368
No. 65 to 369
No. M55 to M370
No. 62 to 371
No. 66 to 372
No. 64 to 373
No. 57 to 374
No. 58 to 375

The 1952 season closed in Miami after the November 20-23 date. A home run of 293 miles to Sarasota brought the year's total to 15,003 miles.

During the 1953 season Concello was still looking for ways to increase profits and cut expenses. The cost of moving the 70 car train was still a major expense. Concello's goal seemed to be a 50 car train. The downsizing of the train was one of a number of issues that lead to his resignation at the end of the season. The number of coaches was the same as in 1952.

The 1954 train was again 70 cars with the number of coaches remaining the same. With Concello's departure, his private car St. Louis, number 66, was taken off the road and was replaced by the Jomar. Henry Ringling North traveled with the show and Frank McClosky became the general manager. Mrs. Edith Ringling, the widow of Charles

Aerial view of Ringling-Barnum winter quarters in 1955, showing World War II hospital cars. New show in rehearsals. Howard Tibbals collection.

Ringling, died. John Ringling North continued as CEO and in that role decided the show would remain at 70 cars.

The train for New York City carried 18 coaches. It left Sarasota on March 25 for the Madison Square Garden opening on March 31. The number of coaches going to New York disagrees with data in the McClosky files by two cars, one of which might be the advance car which headed North on March 1.

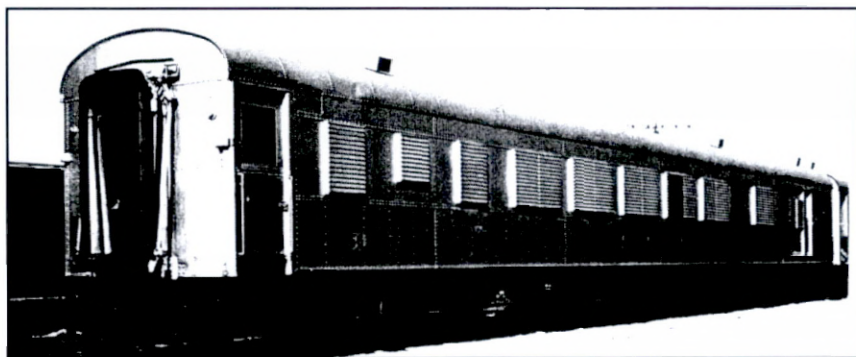
The canvas train left Sarasota for Baltimore on May 13 carrying 7 coaches numbered 121, 124, 247, 250, 251, 253, and 254 which would make

Car 66 Rudy Bundy's private car on Ringling-Barnum in 1955. Note opening just below windows covered over and double louver window inserts. Circus World Museum collection.

McClosky's coach count of 16 correct as a total of 23 coaches were carried in 1954.

An up swing in business during the 1954 season fueled plans to enlarge the show. The big top's seating capacity was increased by moving the menagerie, which was enlarged, back into a separate tent. The bigger elephant herd required additional stock cars. Additional flat cars were also required. McClosky conferred in Chicago with executives of the Thrall Car Company with the result being the purchase of two more 72 foot flats. These cars were slightly different than the 10 purchased from Thrall in 1949.

For the 1955 season North announced a new marketing policy which virtually killed all outdoor advertising. The new scheme eliminated the advance ear. Ringling billers would henceforth move by truck. In another surprise move, North appointed Michael J. Burke, brother Henry North's long-time



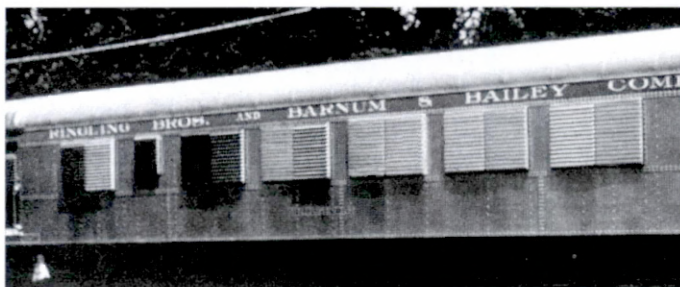
friend and military colleague in the OSS, to the top executive position. Burke moved into the Jomar at winter quarters, sharing the car with the Norths.

Ten cars were added to the train, pushing the total to 80, the largest number since 1950. Two more coaches were added. The February 5, 1955 *Billboard* stated that "for sure the former advance car would be converted into a coach." This report proved false. When the car was sold to Circus World Museum in 1960 it was still in its original configuration.

All the cars were back with the show; none were ahead. The circus still moved in three sections. The two additional coaches were put on the third section. One of them had been on the third section in 1950 and had remained in winter quarters since then. It became number 364, Chicago, in 1955. The second car added was number 84, Caledonia, last used by Mrs. Charles Ringling in 1949. It was converted into a coach and given the name Bridgeport and the number 367. The Seattle car had been number 367, but was given the new number of 376 for 1955. Two hospital cars were left in winter quarters, the St. Louis, number 372; and the advance car.

The McClosky files do not reveal how many coaches moved with the New York City or the canvas trains.

The route book lists four coaches on the first section; eight on the second and 13 on the third. My analysis



Car 367 Bridgeport in 1955. From color slide. Jim Caldwell collection.

has produced the following probable coach list for 1955:

First section

- No. 121. Indiana
- No. M122. Maryland
- No. 123. Nebraska
- No. 124. Texas

Second section

- No. 247. Connecticut
- No. 248. Nevada
- No. 249. Florida
- No. M250. Utah
- No. 251. Idaho
- No. 252. Ohio
- No. 253. Sarasota
- No. 254. Wisconsin

Third Section

- No. 364. Chicago
- No. 365. New Orleans
- No. 366. San Antonio
- No. 367. Bridgeport
- No. 368. Washington
- No. 369. Little Rock
- No. M370. Pittsburgh
- No. 371. Los Angeles
- No. 373. Louisville
- No. 374. Portland

One of the few remaining hospital cars being unloaded at the Circus World Museum. Tom Parkinson photo.

- No. 375. Birmingham
- No. 376. Seattle

Labor and other internal problems plagued the show for most of 1955. The August 13 *Billboard* announced that at St. Paul, Minnesota on August 4 Burke fired the show's three managers, McClosky,

Lawson, and Walter Kernan. Lloyd Morgan was named manager. This action solved only part of the show's issues as labor unrest persisted the balance of the season.

The author visited the circus during several stands in New England before moving to California in September, just in time to catch the show in Van Nuys on September 12 where it was picketed by the AFL-CIO. Anti-circus pamphlets were passed out at both performances. I was shocked by the run down appearance of the show and equipment compared to what I had observed at the Boston Garden and under canvas in Rhode Island and New Hampshire that spring. The season closed at Sarasota on December 14.

Further personnel changes continued during the winter of 1955-1956. The 1956 train was one car less than in 1955, moving on 79 cars with none in advance. The laundry-dry cleaning car number 124, Texas, was left in quarters.

The New York train was 42 cars of which 18 were coaches. The canvas train with six coaches went to Baltimore, making a total of 23 hospital cars plus the venerable Jomar. The season only lasted until July when the Greatest Show on Earth closed its last under-canvas tour prematurely at Pittsburgh on July 16.

The author thanks Fred Dahlinger, Jr. of the Circus World Museum for his help and encouragement. Others to whom thanks are due include Major General Hugh F. Foster, Jr. for his superb knowledge of military rail equipment, Fred D. Pfening, Jr., Fred D. Pfening III, Jim Caldwell, Dominic Yodice, and Joe Bradbury. The Tom Parkinson, Frank McClosky, and Ringling-Barnum papers at Circus World Museum were of great help.



COACH HISTORY 1947-1956

HOSPITAL CARS ONLY

1947 (41-38)
 38 (ALABAMA)
 39 MARYLAND
 40 NEBRASKA
 41 WISCONSIN
 42 FLORIDA
 43 (ILLINOIS)
 44 IDAHO
 45 OHIO
 46 UTAH
 47 NEVADA
 48 KANSAS
 55 PITTSBURGH
 56 no name
 57 PORTLAND
 58 BIRMINGHAM
 59 SAN ANTONIO
 60 WASHINGTON
 61 SEATTLE
 62 LOS ANGELES
 63 SARASOTA
 64 (WORCESTER)
 65 (NEW YORK)
 66 ST LOUIS
 67 Private
 68 LOUISVILLE

1948 (26)
 38 (INDIANA)
 39 MARYLAND
 40 NEBRASKA
 41 CONNECTICUT
 42 NEVADA
 43 WISCONSIN
 44 IDAHO
 45 FLORIDA
 46 UTAH
 63 SARASOTA
 47 OHIO
 48 KANSAS
 56 (NEW ORLEANS)
 57 PORTLAND
 58 BIRMINGHAM
 59 SAN ANTONIO
 60 WASHINGTON
 61 SEATTLE
 62 LOS ANGELES
 64 LOUISVILLE
 65 (LITTLE ROCK)
 66 ST LOUIS
 84 (CALEDONIA)
 ADVANCE CAR
 37 TEXAS
 92 JOMAR
 93 CHEYENNE
 CARS LEFT IN W. Q.
 55 PITTSBURGH

1949 (27)
 38 INDIANA
 39 MARYLAND
 40 NEBRASKA
 41 CONNECTICUT
 42 NEVADA
 43 WISCONSIN
 44 IDAHO
 45 FLORIDA
 46 UTAH
 47 SARASOTA
 48 KANSAS
 49 OHIO
 55 PITTSBURGH
 56 NEW ORLEANS
 57 PORTLAND
 58 BIRMINGHAM
 59 SAN ANTONIO
 60 WASHINGTON
 61 SEATTLE
 62 LOS ANGELES
 64 LOUISVILLE
 65 LITTLE ROCK
 66 ST LOUIS
 84 CALEDONIA
 ADVANCE CAR
 37 TEXAS
 JOMAR
 CHEYENNE

1950 (24)
 38 INDIANA
 39 MARYLAND
 40 NEBRASKA
 41 CONNECTICUT
 42 NEVADA
 43 WISCONSIN
 44 IDAHO
 45 FLORIDA
 46 SARASOTA
 47 UTAH
 48 KANSAS
 49 OHIO
 55 PITTSBURGH
 56 NEW ORLEANS
 57 PORTLAND
 58 BIRMINGHAM
 59 SAN ANTONIO
 60 WASHINGTON
 61 SEATTLE
 62 LOS ANGELES
 64 LOUISVILLE
 65 LITTLE ROCK
 66 ST LOUIS
 ADVANCE CAR
 37 TEXAS
 LEFT IN W. Q.
 48 KANSAS
 84 CALEDONIA
 JOMAR
 CHEYENNE

1951 (23)
 38 INDIANA
 39 MARYLAND
 40 NEBRASKA
 41 CONNECTICUT
 42 NEVADA
 43 WISCONSIN
 44 IDAHO
 45 FLORIDA
 46 SARASOTA
 47 UTAH
 49 OHIO
 55 PITTSBURGH
 56 NEW ORLEANS
 57 PORTLAND
 58 BIRMINGHAM
 59 SAN ANTONIO
 60 WASHINGTON
 61 SEATTLE
 62 LOS ANGELES
 64 LOUISVILLE
 65 LITTLE ROCK
 66 ST LOUIS
 ADVANCE CAR
 37 TEXAS
 LEFT IN W. Q.
 48 KANSAS
 84 CALEDONIA
 JOMAR
 CHEYENNE

1952 (23)
 121 INDIANA
 122 MARYLAND
 123 NEBRASKA
 247 CONNECTICUT
 248 NEVADA
 249 FLORIDA
 250 UTAH
 251 IDAHO
 252 OHIO
 253 SARASOTA
 254 WISCONSIN

1953 (23)
 121 INDIANA
 122 MARYLAND
 123 NEBRASKA
 247 CONNECTICUT
 248 NEVADA
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 253 SARASOTA
 254 WISCONSIN

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1956 (24)
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365 NEW ORLEANS
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 CARS LEFT IN W. Q.
 48 KANSAS
 84 CALEDONIA
 JOMAR
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365 NEW ORLEANS
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364 CHICAGO (48).
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 124 TEXAS
 372 ST. LOUIS
 CHEYENNE



Best Wishes for a Very Happy New Year
from

John & Brigitte Pugh

And the Staff and Cast of the 1999 Edition of

**CLYDE
BEATTY~**
COLE BROS.
CIRCUS
WORLD'S LARGEST
UNDER
THE BIG TOP!



THE SEASON'S BEST FROM STERLING & REID BROS. 3-RING CIRCUS



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AMERICA'S
GREATEST
3 RING
CIRCUS
UNDER THE
BIG TOP
★ ★ ★



GREETING AND BEST WISHES FOR THE

*Holidays and
the New Year*

TOMMY - STRUPPI - NELLIE

CAMELS, THE SHIPS OF THE DESERT

PART TWO

By Richard J. Reynolds, III

Editor's Note: Part I of this paper appeared in the November-December 1998 issue. There the author reviewed the characteristics of the camel, its natural history, relationship and usefulness to man, and its introduction around the world, including an account of the ones brought to the United States through the early 1850s.

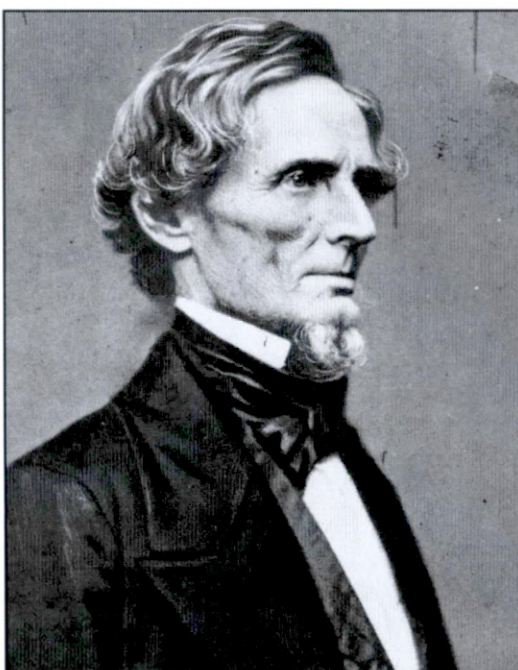
In the mid-nineteenth century camels were introduced to America's western frontier. Beginning in 1856 and continuing for most of the next fifty years, camels of both species were in the news from the West, first as experiments in military, exploratory, and commercial uses and later as feral animals. In all, they saw service in eight of our present-day western states: Arizona, California, Idaho, Montana, New Mexico, Nevada, Texas, and Washington. They were also used in Canada (British Columbia) as well as in Mexico. These animals came from six shipments, three of which landed in Texas and three in San Francisco. Many of these camels or their descendants would wind up with circuses. The story of how that came about requires some exploration.¹

Jefferson Davis (1808-1889) is best known as the first and only President of the Confederate States of America. As material to the subject at hand, however, he was the person chiefly responsible for the introduction of camels into the American southwest. That occurred while he was Secretary of War under U. S. President Franklin Pierce from 1853 to 1857. The so-called Jefferson Davis camel experiment grew out of the

need to secure the newly annexed southwestern territories following the Mexican War of 1846-1848. The resulting Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo plus additional land acquired from Mexico via the Gadsden Purchase of 1853 garnered for the United States all of what now comprises the states of Arizona, California, Nevada, and Utah, plus parts of present Colorado, New Mexico and Wyoming—an enormous area.

Military outposts and small frontier settlements had to be connected and protected. The area had to be explored and surveyed. Moreover, there was now an opportunity to develop trade routes across the southwest to California. Such would

1. Jefferson Davis (Courtesy of National Archives, Photo no. 111-B5153.)



afford alternatives for reaching the Golden State, ones that did not suffer the perils of the harsh winters encountered along the more northerly routes. The establishment of a railroad to California across the southwest, though already conceptualized, was seen as far off in the future.²

Jefferson Davis had fought with distinction in the Mexican War and knew first hand the difficulties in using horses, mules, and oxen in the newly annexed hot and dry territory. He became convinced that camels would be ideal substitutes. He was particularly interested in using fast Arabian camels that could chase and outlast the ponies of marauding Indians. Though the idea actually originated with other veterans of the Mexican War, Davis became the principal advocate and certainly the highest placed. Between 1848 and 1852 "camel" proposals were made to both the War Department and Congress. Davis, by then a United States Senator, supported the measures, and there was considerable support in the press. Opponents called the proposals extravagant or ludicrous, and there was a stalemate.

TO THE LEVANT

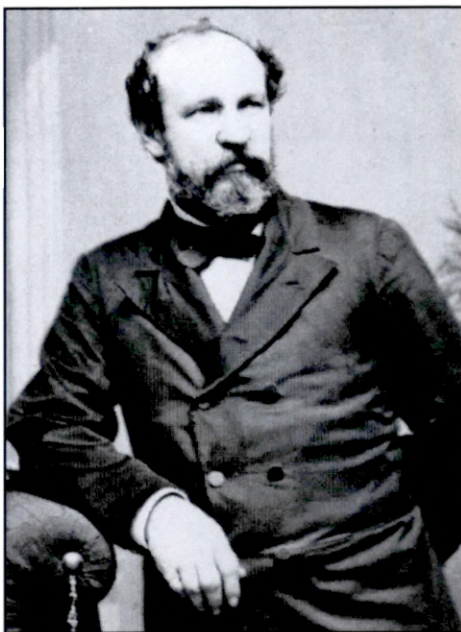
When Davis became Secretary of War he made the proposal a reality. His project got underway in 1855 when he sent for camels from the Levant. He selected two men for the job. One was Army Major Henry Constantine Wayne (1815-1883), a native of Savannah, Georgia, graduate of the U.S. Military Academy in West Point, New York and son of U. S. Supreme Court Justice James M. Wayne. The younger Wayne was a veteran

of the Mexican War, and an early advocate of camel use in the southwest. The other selectee was Navy Lieutenant David Dixon Porter (1813-1891), a native of Chester, Pennsylvania. He would subsequently become a Vice-Admiral. As such, he served as superintendent of the United States Naval Academy, Annapolis, Maryland from 1865 to 1869.³

To Porter fell the responsibility of captaining and fixing camel accommodations on the USS *Supply*, the ship designated for the expedition to the Mediterranean. The *Supply* was a three-masted United States store-ship built in 1846, 141 feet long, 29 feet in the beam, and with a displacement of 547 tons. Working at the Brooklyn Navy Yard in the Port of New York, Porter cleverly adapted the ship for a load of camels. On the spar deck he built a barn like structure in which were individual stalls with padding and other devices to prevent injury in rough sea. On June 3, 1855 the *Supply*, under command of Lt. Porter, set sail for Italy. There he was to hook up with Wayne who had gone ahead, first to England, then to France.

Part of the mission was fact finding—to learn as much as possible about camels, their husbandry, and uses. Hence, Wayne visited the London zoo to see its camels and discuss their care with the staff. He then went to France hoping to meet with officials who knew camels from North Africa. Meanwhile, Porter went to Pisa. There he observed the 250 dromedaries of the Duke of Tuscany. These animals were the descendants of the ones we mentioned in Part I as having been imported two hundred years previously by Ferdinand di Medici. Work-wise, the Duke's herd was said to replace a thousand horses. However, Porter found them to be overworked and in poor condition. When Wayne arrived in northern Italian port of Spezzia the two were ready to begin their camel shopping.

The first stop in camel country was at Tunis, Tunisia (North Africa) in August 1855. There Mohammed Pasha gave them two dromedaries and they bought a third at a local corral. These were taken aboard so that they could be studied while Porter



2. U. S. Army Major Henry Constantine Wayne as he appeared in 1875. (Courtesy of Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia Libraries).

and Wayne sailed around. Two of the three turned out to be sorry animals and were sold later. However, Tunis did mark one good turn, for it was there that Porter's brother-in-law joined the camel expedition. He was Gwinn Harris Heap, a veteran U.S. government man who had spent many years in Tunis and knew both camels and the culture of the locals. Not only that, but in 1853 Heap had been in the American West with another relative, his cousin Edward Fitzgerald Beale. Both the cousins were staunch advocates of camel use in the American southwest (more about Beale shortly). Reviewing the Tunis camel situation and the poor animals dumped on them by the locals, Heap advised Porter and Wayne to quit that place.

The Americans then went to Smyrna (now Izmir), Turkey. There they found that quality animals were hard to find at reasonable prices. The reason was the Crimean War. Though it was then winding down, it had caused a shortage of our subject animals. As we noted in Part I, the British alone had pressed 8,000 camels into that effort.

Secretary of War Davis had believed good dromedaries could be located at Salonica, Greece (then

part of Turkey). So, the *Supply* crossed the Aegean Sea to that Greek port. Again, no camels were to be had at affordable prices. Frustrated, the Americans went to Constantinople (Istanbul), Turkey. Again they could find no animals worth buying. So, the trio decided to find out for themselves about camels at war.

From Constantinople, Heap, Porter, and Wayne took the British ship *Imperador* across the Black Sea to Balaklava on the Crimean Peninsula, arriving there on October 17, 1855. That was a month after the Allies had secured the victory. They heard glowing reports from English officers about the efficacy of camels for military service. Porter and Wayne were greatly enthused by what they learned. It was in the Crimea that they saw their first Bactrians. However, Wayne thought them not as good as the dromedaries. They were slower, and their two humps made the affixing of loads more difficult.

The fact-finding part of the mission was now completed, and the Americans needed to get on with the business of buying good camels. They had already learned that shrewd Muslim traders were not above taking advantage of the unknowing. However, the Yanks had learned quickly and were now most discerning about the animals being offered. The Sultan in Constantinople had heard about the Americans' camel quest. When they got back there from the Crimea, he told them that he would contribute four animals from his stock. They waited and waited but the Sultan did not deliver. Ignoring diplomatic niceties, the Yanks simply sailed away to Egypt where they hoped to have better success. By then it was November 1855.

In Alexandria, Egypt, after much delay and haggling, some of it at the diplomatic level, Porter and Wayne finally assembled nine passable dromedaries, including six from the private stock of the Viceroy. These, together with the one obtained in Tunisia five months earlier, made a total of ten animals acquired to date⁴ that the *Supply* put out to sea on January 22, 1856, headed back to Smyrna. Meanwhile, earlier that month Heap had gone ahead to see if

better luck could be had there. With the shooting now ended in the Crimea, camels were more plentiful in Turkey. Heap engaged a young Syrian camel driver, adventurer, and fortune seeker to assist in the effort. He was Hadji Ali (c. 1828-1902), a chap later known as "Hi Jolly" in the crude phonetics of America's western frontier. He would play a major role in the story of camels in the West.

By the time the *Supply* arrived in Smyrna, Heap and Hadji Ali had secured twenty-three good camels to go with the ten already acquired. It was time to bring them to America. To that end the *Supply* departed Turkey on February 15, 1856 with 33 animals: 10 male and 23 female dromedaries, 2 male Bactrians, and 1 hybrid (male Bactrian x female dromedary) which the Muslims called a "Booghdee" or "Tuilu." One of the male Bactrians was a shaggy and massive animal, standing seven feet, five inches tall and weighing a ton.

The homeward journey was a long one. En route the *Supply* put into Kingston, Jamaica. Visitors thronged aboard the ship to see the animals--4,000 in one day alone. However, the weather was hot and humid, hard on the camels, and the ship had to hasten its departure. It headed into the Gulf of Mexico. The destination was Indianola, Texas on the Bay behind Matagora Island. The *Supply* arrived off there on April 29, 1856. But, owing to rough seas, the camels could not be loaded onto the lighter necessary to get them ashore. So, *Supply* headed east to the mouth of the Mississippi, where, eleven days later, they were put aboard the lighter *Fashion* under Maj. Wayne. Finally, on May 13 and 14, 1856, after three months at sea, the weary animals were disembarked at Powderhorn Lake adjacent to Indianola.

Despite the long journey, losses were surprisingly few. One adult had died but two of three calves born at sea survived for a net gain of one animal, making a total of 34 put ashore.

For a time the camels rested at Indianola where they were the focus of much attention by the locals. Suspicious and wary, the Texans doubted what they were being told about the ability of the strange animals to carry great loads. So, Maj. Wayne gave a public demonstration.

A male was made to kneel in the familiar position. Upon its back Wayne had his men affix two hay bales weighing 314 pounds each. "He'll never get up," scoffed the locals. Wayne then loaded the beast with two more bales for a total of 1,256 pounds. With seeming disdain, the camel rose with ease and strode off leaving the skeptics open-mouthed.

CAMP VERDE

During a two-week period in June 1856 the camels were led overland the 140 miles from Indianola to San Antonio where they rested. Jefferson Davis had directed that a permanent camel base be established. Major Wayne scouted the area for a suitable site. He found it amid the sparkling streams, huge cypress trees, and lush grasses on the Edwards Plateau which rises to an altitude of over a thousand feet northwest of San Antonio. The place of his choice was a new cavalry post called Camp Verde. It was near Bandera Pass in present Kerr County some sixty miles northwest of San Antonio and ten miles south of Kerrville. (The camp's location was just west of present Interstate Highway 10.) At Camp Verde Wayne designed and supervised the construction of a special camel enclosure or khan patterned after those he had seen in the Le-

3. U. S. Navy Lieutenant David Dixon Porter as he appeared later when he was a Vice-Admiral. (Courtesy of United States Naval Academy Archives.)

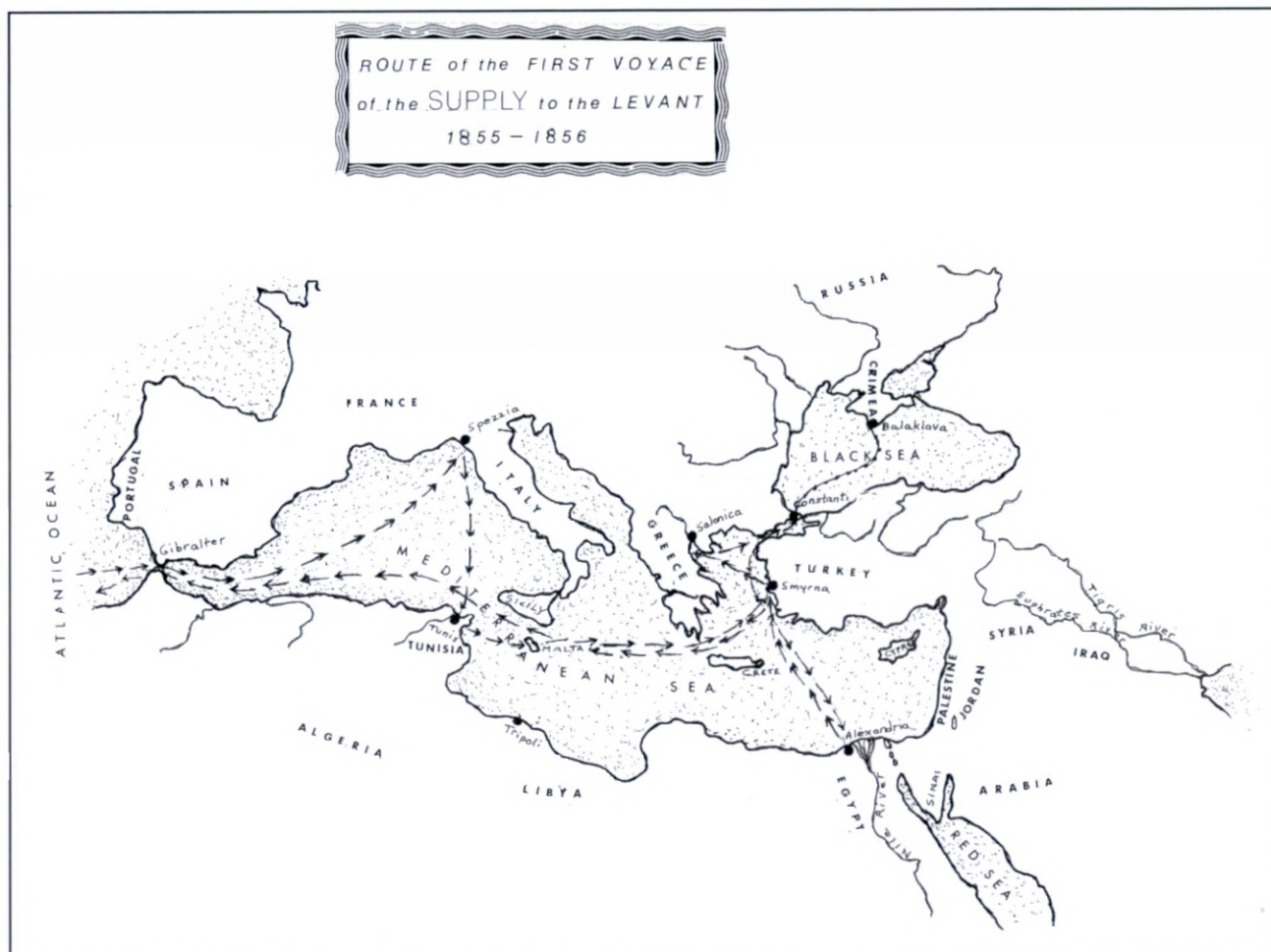


vant. In late August the camels were led from San Antonio to their new home at Camp Verde. There Major Wayne began his experiments.

The camels were soon put into the regular supply trains that marched back and forth between Camp Verde and San Antonio. There is also evidence that they were assigned to tote supplies for Indian scouting parties. Despite the beauty and obvious attractiveness of the Edwards Plateau to prospective settlers, raiding parties of Comanche Indians were a constant menace, and the Army had to combat them.⁵ Whatever their assignment, Wayne found that the camels performed wonderfully, just as he had anticipated.

There was a major problem, however, and it would never be overcome. Put simply, the Army's crusty enlisted men who served as teamsters, muleskinners, and wagon masters hated them. Why? Because they were different. They were not like the mules and horses the men were used to, did not respond the same way to bullying, and otherwise represented that greatest of menaces--change. Additionally, the camels were disliked by farmers, riders, and teamsters, whose horses were spooked by the sight of them. This was the initial reaction by the equines. Given time, horses and mules could get as used to camels as anything else (no better example of that than the circus). But few were willing to grant a second chance. The inertia of old ways was hard to budge, particularly in favor of a beast of strange and sometimes unpleasant disposition. Negative reactions notwithstanding, the ships of the desert proved they could out-haul the equine tribe and make better time over longer distances.

Meanwhile, just as the first camels were getting their feet under them in Texas, Lieutenant Porter sailed back to New York to plan another camel collecting expedition in the Levant. In July 1856 he again departed in the *Supply* for the Mediterranean. Wayne did not go this time but, instead, stayed behind to manage the Texas experiments. Porter again steered his camel ship to Smyrna (Izmir), Turkey. There he loaded 44 animals: 2 Bactrian males, 3 dromedary males, 37 dromedary



females, and 2 hybrids (male and female). The *Supply* left Turkey for America on November 15, 1856. This time Hadji Ali was a passenger. He had wanted to come to America with the first shipment. However, Porter had prevailed on him to stay behind with assurances that he would be returning for a second load and needed the camel driver to be on the lookout for good animals until then.

The *Supply's* second camel passage to America was quicker than the first but rougher. Three of the camels had died en route but the surviving forty-one were landed safely on February 10, 1857. The *Supply* had once again taken them first to the mouth of the Mississippi for transfer to another ship that brought them to the Indianola. On April 24th they headed out for Camp Verde. Their arrival there gave the post a total of 70 camels (5 from the first group having died in the meantime).

The new camels were put under the supervision of the camp's commander, Captain Innis N. Palmer of

4. Courtesy of Eva Jolene Boyd.

the U. S. Cavalry. Wayne was gone, having departed Camp Verde in January 1857. He had established the caravansary, seen to the acclimatization of the first group of animals, and been ordered back to his old desk at the Quartermaster's Office in Washington. For his work in establishing camels in the southwestern United States, Major Henry C. Wayne was awarded the 1858 first class gold medal by the French *Société impériale Zoologique d'acclimation de Paris*.

CARAVAN TO CALIFORNIA

The time had now come to put the Texas camels to a true test of endurance on a long trek. The Federal Government needed to survey and establish a road running more or less along the thirty-fifth parallel and extending from the vicinity of Fort Defiance, Arizona (then New Mexico Territory) west to a point on the Colorado River and the

California border. As it turned out, the river crossing later became the site of Fort Mojave, just north of present-day Needles, California.

To command the expedition Secretary of War John B. Floyd (Jefferson Davis' successor) selected Edward Fitzgerald Beale (1822-1893). "Ned" Beale was a Navy veteran, hero of the Mexican War, California sheep rancher, and co-explorer with Kit Carson of Death Valley. When summoned for the camel expedition, he was Superintendent of California's Indian Affairs. He was a camel enthusiast, and no one was better suited for the task.

Beale assembled the expedition in San Antonio, bringing twenty-five camels down from Camp Verde. On June 25, 1857 they set out: forty men and twenty-five burden camels, together with horses, teams of mules, wagons, dogs, and one hundred sheep. Including side trips the march would cover some 1,860 miles before ending ceremonially in the dusty

adobe village of Los Angeles (population then 1,500). They arrived there on November 9, 1857, four months and 16 days after they had departed San Antonio, without a doubt the longest camel caravan ever undertaken in the United States.

Beale's route took the caravan to many towns and some states that we now know well but were not in existence in 1857. (To describe the route we will use present geographic references.) First they went from San Antonio to El Paso and thence north to Albuquerque, New Mexico. There a local wag, upon seeing the red painted hospital wagon and all the camels with bells on their necks, pronounced that a circus had come to town.⁶ From Albuquerque the caravan made a side trip to Santa Fe. Then, it was west to Fort Defiance.

Beale had selected Zuni, New Mexico, some fifty miles south of Fort Defiance as the place to begin his assignment. From there they marched and worked westward across northern Arizona via the strange Petrified Forest, Flagstaff, Kingman, and on to the Colorado River where the road work officially ended. Forging the river, they crossed California's daunting Mojave Desert to Cajon Pass, San Bernardino, and into Los Angeles. With but a few jogs here and there, the road Beale marked across northern Arizona is the very same one next to which the Santa Fe Railroad tracks were later laid (now Burlington Northern-Santa Fe's main line to southern California). It is also where the famous "Route 66" highway was put down (now mostly covered over by the later Interstate Highway 40). And just think, camels led the way!

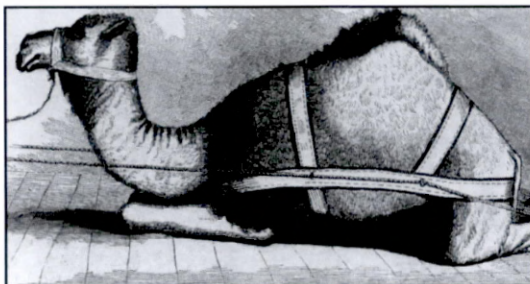
Beale was ecstatic over the way the camels performed, easily besting the horses and mules. There came a point in Arizona west of present Flagstaff when water could not be found. The equines were crazed with thirst and nearly perished while the camels were unfazed, contentedly munching the tough desert plants along the way as though water was unimportant. At the Colorado River, Beale was pleasantly surprised to find that, contrary to popular myth, camels will enter the water. After some coaxing, all of them swam the

river safely to the California side while ten mules and two horses drowned in the current. The marvelous performance of the camels led Beale to dub them "Noble Brutes."

Fort Tejon was the place where Beale's camels were to be permanently stationed in California. Established by the Army in 1854, it was located near the Tehachapi Mountains, north of Los Angeles and about half way from there to Bakersfield. The site is now the Ft. Tejon State Historical Park and is located along Interstate Highway 5. Fort Tejon was used for only ten years as a military post. Unfortunately, it was built almost atop the infamous San Andreas Fault. It had been in service for only three years when, on January 9, 1857, it was badly damaged by a tremendous earthquake that, had the Richter scale been in use back then, would have measured 7.9 in magnitude. Fortunately the big shake happened eleven months before Beale's camels got there.⁷

The entry into Los Angeles on November 9, mentioned earlier, was made via the stagecoach road linking the town with San Bernardino. Only two camels were used, Seid, a white male dromedary, and Tuili, a male hybrid (dromedary x Bactrian). Beale rode the former and Hi Jolly (Hadji Ali) the latter. These were two of the largest and best of Beale's camels. Alas, as we shall see in a moment they would come to blows and fatal ones at that. To make the most impact on the Angelenos, Hi Jolly put on his colorful native garb. A

5. Camel secured for a gale aboard the ship *Supply*. To avoid injury while in rough sea, the harnesses kept the camels in the kneeling position. Drawn by Gwinn Harris Heap. (Courtesy of National Archives. Photo no. 11-SC-100850).



string of bells were hung around Tuili's neck and down his legs. Thus attired, Hi Jolly upon his big humped mount went running into the center of the sleepy village. While Beale and Hi Jolly were making a show in Los Angeles, the rest of the caravan had split off at San Bernardino and marched northwesterly to Ft. Tejon. Beale, Hi Jolly and their respective mounts stayed but two days in the City of the Angels. Then, they too hiked north to join the rest. Two months later, in January 1858, Beale came back to Los Angeles with a true caravan of fourteen animals and this pleased the locals a lot more.

THE MYSTERIOUS MRS. WATSON

Our story now takes us back to Texas and its Galveston Island In October 1858 the British ship *Thomas Watson* (perhaps accompanied by another vessel)⁸ sailed into that island's port city. Aboard were eighty-nine camels, mostly dromedaries but with some bactrians as well. They belonged to an English lady named Mrs. M. J. Watson. This camel shipment is shrouded in mystery. It is uncertain whether the beasts were bound for Texas or whether the resolute British lady planned to take them elsewhere. Further, the accounts differ as to whether Mrs. Watson was a resident of the Houston area or she arrived on the boat with the animals.⁹ There was a suspicion that the ship(s) were involved in illegal slave smuggling, and they were detained at Galveston. Though this allegation could not be proved, still the authorities would not grant permission to depart. Mrs. Watson became irate. She had the camels off loaded and set free to roam Galveston Island. Alas, they fared poorly. They became nuisances with some of them roaming the streets of Galveston. Locals shot many, some for the purpose of trying out camel steaks. All the while the ship(s) that brought them remained tied up.

Eventually, the surviving Galveston camels, some forty in number, including six or seven Bactrians, were rounded up. Mrs. Watson needed a place to keep them. For this she turned to Francis R. Lubbock, a rancher

and soon to be Governor of Texas who had a spread six miles south of Houston. Lubbock agreed to board the camels. Hence, they were put aboard a steamship and taken up Galveston Bay and into Buffalo Bayou (now the Houston ship channel). They were unloaded at the mouth of Sim's Bayou and marched to Lubbock's nearby land. He installed them in a twenty-five acre tract that extended to the banks of Buffalo Bayou. Like Beale at the Colorado River, Lubbock also found that the camels were not adverse to water, for they learned to swim in the bayou.¹⁰

Natives who had come with them attended the camels. In Lubbock's words these fellows were "Turks or Arabs of unpronounceable names." From time to time, the beasts with their exotic riders trekked into Houston where their novelty created quite a sensation among the townspeople. We do not know what became of either Mrs. Watson or her camels. She seems to have sailed away from Galveston leaving the beasts with Lubbock who, it is said, kept them for a year.¹¹ It seems passing strange that forty camels would just disappear. However, subsequent sightings of feral camels in this coastal Texas area suggest that at least some of them were, once again, turned loose to fend for themselves.

CAMELS AT WORK

While Mrs. Watson's camels dropped from sight in the pages of Texas history, not so those at the Camp Verde. In 1859 and again in 1860, they were used in major Army expeditions that explored the Trans-Pecos and Big Bend Country comprising the Texas wilderness between the Pecos and Rio Grande Rivers down to the Mexican border. Led by Lieutenants William H. Echols and Edward L. Hartz, each of those expeditions used, respectively, twenty-four and twenty camels. Throughout these arduous marches, the camels proved their worth.

During the years between 1858 and the outbreak of war in 1861, the army's Texas camels were used rather extensively in supply trains--marching in and out of Camp Verde and between San Antonio and Gulf Coast points, including Brownsville



6. Edward Fitzgerald Beale in his later years. (Neg. No. 523, Edouart, photographer. Courtesy of California Historical Society, Title Insurance & Trust Photo Collection, Dept. of Special Collections, University of Southern California Library.)

at the southernmost tip of the Lone Star State. Some wound up stationed at other Army posts, among them Fort Bliss (now El Paso).¹²

Meanwhile, out on the West Coast, there was an ever-present need to improve the flow of supplies from California into Arizona (then part of New Mexico Territory). Accordingly, Ned Beale had high hopes for his California herd. They had no sooner arrived at Fort Tejon than he sent some of them up into the Sierra Mountains to see how they fared under winter conditions.¹³ OK was the verdict, which was certainly different from what happened, eighty-three years later, to those the British marched into the cold Ethiopian Highlands as described in Part I.

In January 1858 Beale took fourteen of the camels to Los Angeles where, as we noted earlier, the townspeople were made happy by their arrival. In that city he formed them into a caravan and headed back to Fort Mojave and into Arizona to see how his road of the year before had held up. Over the next five years, several additional long distance camel trains were organized to take

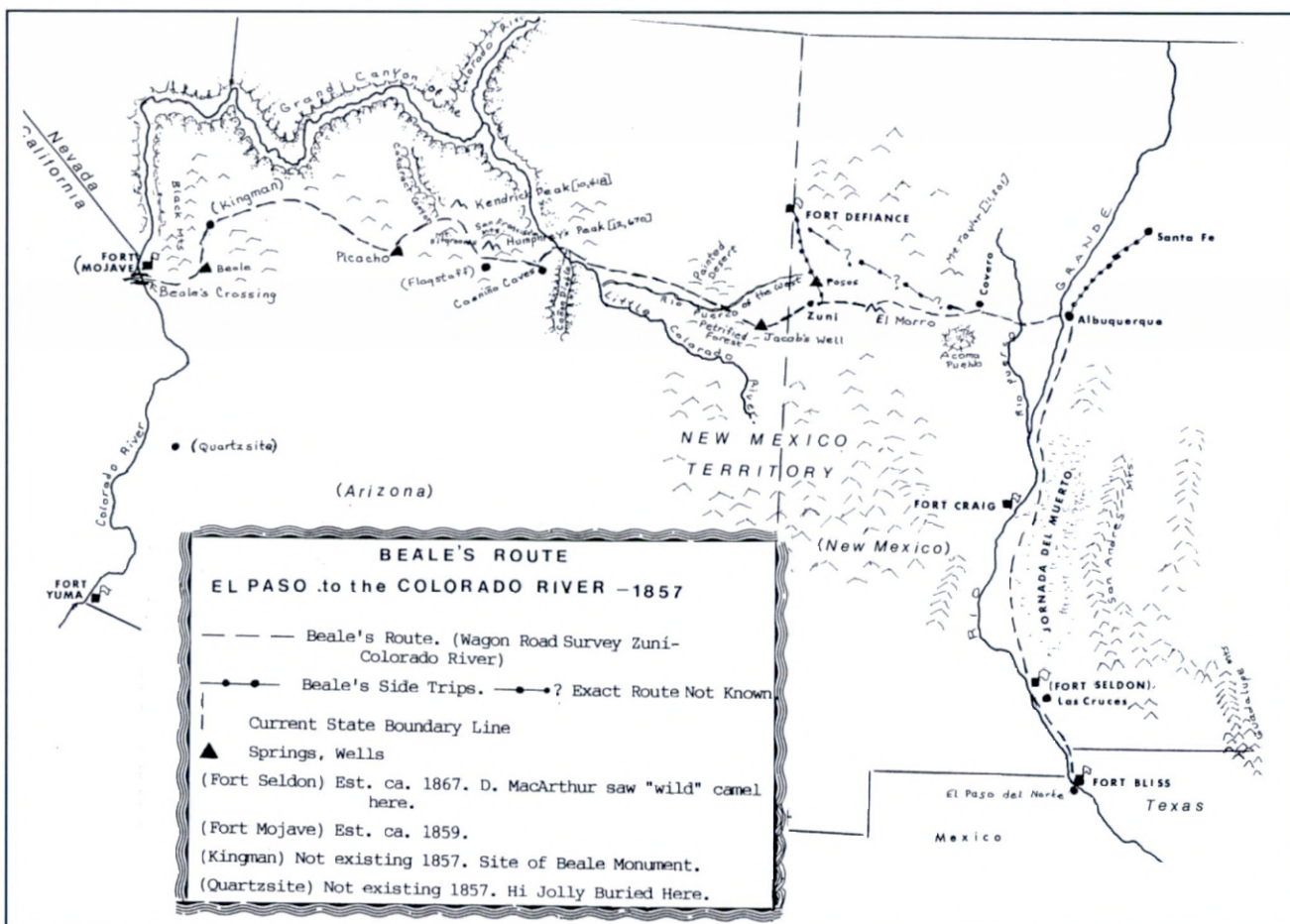
the hike east across California with destinations being Fort Mojave, Fort Yuma, and Tucson. One such, to Fort Mojave, was dubbed the "Dromedary Line." Alas, these were only infrequent experiments. They were labeled failures, as much as anything because the Army men in charge (other than Beale) simply would not surrender their dislike of the beasts. Also, it was said that the rocky surface of the Arizona and California deserts hurt the camels' feet, the point being made that the America's southwestern deserts were unlike the smoother ones of their native lands.¹⁴

A boundary survey put the California herd to its most successful test. This expedition, which included three camels, took place between February and April 1861. Under field direction of Dr. J. R. N. Owen, its purpose was to verify the long, slanting border separating California and Nevada. As our maps show, it runs from Lake Bigler (now Tahoe) on the north to the Colorado River at Fort Mojave on the south. Because of the harsh conditions, the work was confined to the southern part with the party only going north as far as the mountains around Death Valley.

FIGHT TO THE DEATH

To make ready for Dr. Owen's border survey, four of Beale's strongest and most reliable camels were brought down from Ft. Tejon to the Quartermaster Depot at Camp Fitzgerald in Los Angeles. This would have been around January or February 1861. The animals were Seid, Tuili, Maya, and Catchouk, the first two being the duo used by Beale and Hi Jolly to make their grand entrance into Los Angeles more than three years earlier.

While awaiting departure for the border, Seid, the white male dromedary, went into rut, got loose, and attacked the male hybrid Tuili. In Part I we indicated that male camels are aggressive during their time of sexual excitement. This incident is a good example. As it turned out Seid picked the wrong animal for a fight, for Tuili was the bigger and stronger of the two. Tuili defended himself with a vengeance. The roaring intensity of the struggle was frightening. No one dared go near the combat-



ants. They bit one another in the neck with fury while delivering powerful kicks. Seid was the loser. He fell to the ground and Tuili delivered the coup de grace with powerful kicks that crushed Seid's skull.

The federal commissioner with overall responsibility for the border survey, Lieutenant Sylvester Mowry, had Seid skinned and his bones shipped to the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C.. There they were mounted and at last account were still on public display. Meanwhile, Dr. Owen, field director for the border survey, had to make do with three instead of four camels.

It bears mentioning that a nearly identical camel fight took place almost sixty years later, on July 19, 1920 with the Al G. Barnes Circus in Muskegon, Michigan. This time the death struggle took place in open view before a shocked public during the street parade. As the crowds along the sidewalks watched in horrid fascination, two camels went at it. Circus attendants tried to separate them by rushing into the fray

7. Courtesy of Eva Jolene Boyd.

and beating the animals with clubs and heavy iron prods. The combatants paid no heed and continued their fight. Finally, the smaller of the two fell to its knees mortally wounded. Blood gushed from its throat, which had been ripped open by terrible bites from the larger camel. Several of the circus men who had tried to intervene were injured seriously.¹⁵

Circus historian Charles Meltzer is a former San Diego zookeeper. He looked after many kinds of animals at that great zoo, including its camels. He found rutting males to be the most vile, vicious, and obnoxious animals imaginable. When the zoo built a new camel compound in the late 1940s or early 1950s, a small holding pen was added behind the barns, out of public view, to house the males when in rut. When that happened no one would go into the holding pen with one of them. The enclosure had a small concrete pad. Meltzer and other keepers had to

hose it off several times a day to keep down the stench.¹⁶

During its rut, a male camel will inflate the soft palate of its mouth and blow it out the side like a giant balloon the size of a man's head. This is accompanied by a gurgling roar with much salivation and regurgitation plus defecation and urination. Adding to this revolting brew are glands at the back of the head which enlarge and discharge an odorous secretion.¹⁷

The rut usually occurs from January to March.¹⁸ And, it was at that time of the year in 1861 when Seid attacked Tuili at the Quartermaster Depot in Los Angeles. Circuses have regularly kept male camels. Luckily, the rutting season takes place when most shows are still in winter quarters. Thus the July 1920 fight between the Al G. Barnes duo would appear to have been a case of simple aggression, probably between two males.

CAMELS IN THE CIVIL WAR

With the first salvos in the War

Between the States having been fired in April 1861, the army decided to close Fort Tejon and bring its troops and their animals down to Los Angeles. There was concern, and rightly so, about Confederate expansion into New Mexico Territory. Moreover, southern California, particularly Los Angeles, was a hotbed of secessionism and bands of southern sympathizers were organizing themselves into paramilitary groups. There was even a "Secession Company" that held public drills. Union forces needed consolidation to meet these threats.¹⁹ As a result, in June 1861 the camels at Fort Tejon were marched to Los Angeles by herders William McLeave and Charles Riley. Numbering thirty-one animals they were sent to the Quartermaster's facilities at Camp Fitzgerald. It was located right in the middle of what is now downtown Los Angeles extending along and around Broadway, Main, First, Second, and Third Streets. The camels were corralled at several locations, one of which was at the corner of what is now First and Broadway, on the very site of the much later Los Angeles Times building. The camel corral was a favorite gathering spot for school

age children, and the keepers often gave them rides.²⁰

Eight hundred Army horses were also kept at Camp Fitzgerald. And, there was a major problem maintaining them plus the camels, namely, a serious lack of water. The source was the Los Angeles River, a few blocks to the East. However, for much of the year it was nothing but a dry bed. So, in September 1861 the camels were moved to Camp Latham, located a short distance to the west near present Culver City. They spent a year there.²¹

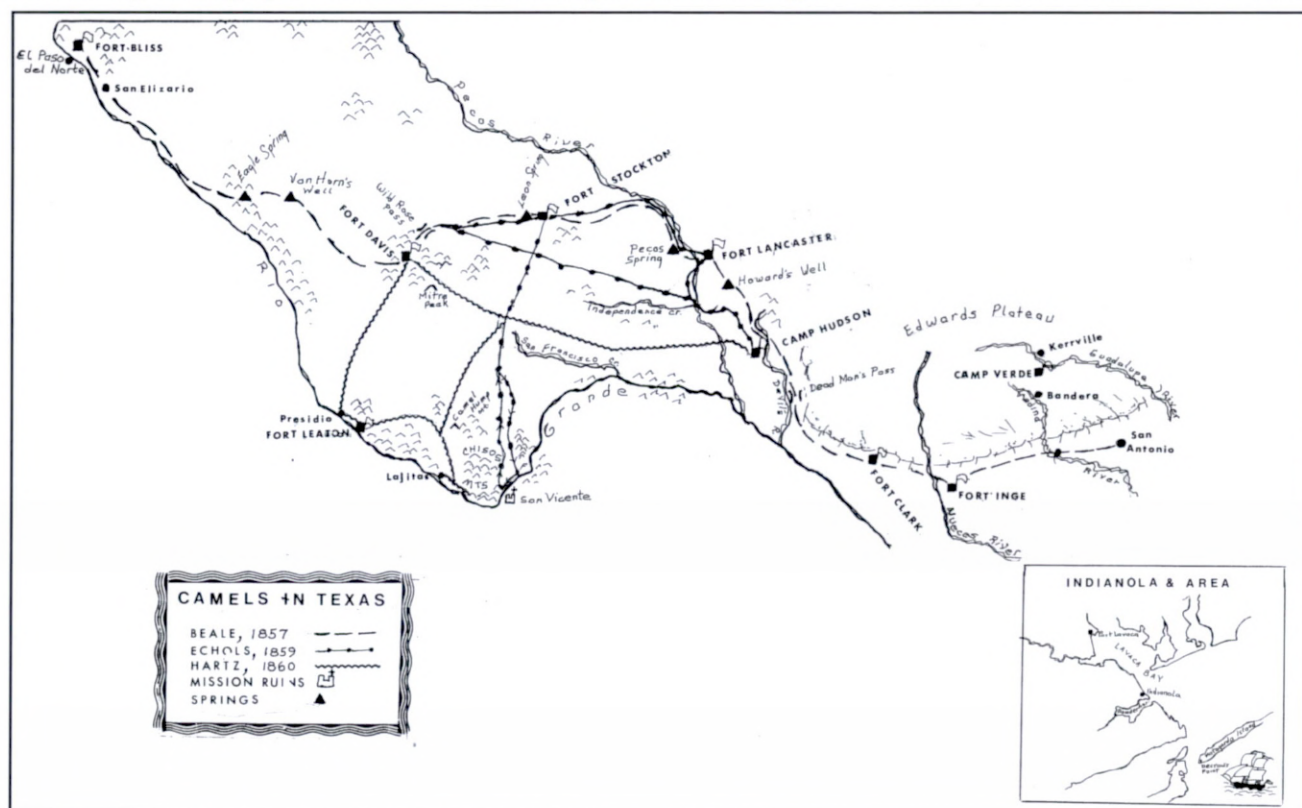
In September 1862 the California camels were moved once again, this time to the Army's staging area at Wilmington on San Pedro Bay, now part of the Los Angeles harbor. The Army had a warehouse and staging area there to handle troops and materials coming from San Francisco by ship. First called Camp Drum and later Drum Barracks after it moved several miles further inland, it is now a Civil War Museum and Research Library. The camels were kept at the first Drum location, now the intersection of "A" Street and Avalon Boulevard. There they stayed

throughout 1863. Except for hauling some freight inland over the twenty miles to downtown Los Angeles and for a January 1863 caravan to Tucson, the Drum camels did nothing but eat off the Army, much to the frustration of the Camp's Commander, Major Clarence E. Bennett.²²

The War Between the States spelled the end of the army's camel experiment. Its proponents found themselves divided. Jefferson Davis became President of the Confederacy. Henry Wayne and David Porter, the duo that had fetched the first ones, wound up on opposite sides. Wayne became Adjutant and Inspector General of his native Georgia while Porter served with distinction in the northern Navy, commanding the Union's mortar flotilla.²³

In 1861 the Union Army surrendered Camp Verde to the Confederates and withdrew until the war was over. Thus it was that the South fell heir to the eighty camels then comprising the Texas herd. Some were used in Confederate mail service. Others toted cotton to Mexico and some hauled salt between Brownsville and San Antonio. But overall, the southerners did little with them. Some of these

8. Courtesy of Eva Jolene Boyd.



"Confederate" animals were simply turned loose to fend for themselves. Three of the strays wandered up into Arkansas where Union forces captured them, took them to Iowa, and auctioned them in 1863.²⁴

In 1862 President Lincoln had appointed Edwin M. Stanton as Secretary of War. He received several proposals for using the Union's California animals but rejected them all. It did not help that they had once been a pet project of the Confederate President. And, Stanton was nothing if not virulently anti-southern. So, in the fall of 1863 War Secretary Stanton ordered that the Army's California camels be sold at public auction.

The thirty-seven animals at Camp Drum were assembled and marched north. Their destination was the Benicia Barracks north of San Francisco where the auction was to take place. Getting there required a long trek. Under command of a certain Captain Dempfill with six men, the camel caravan followed the Pacific Coast north to Santa Barbara, which they reached on December 30, 1863. They then made their way to San Jose and from there around the eastern side of San Francisco Bay and north to Martinez on Carquinez Strait which connects Pan Pablo and Suisun Bays. Across the water lay the destination, Benecia. The camels were ferried across, thus completing a trek of some five hundred miles. Throughout the march they created interest and excitement, including the usual stories of panicked horses encountered along the way.²⁵

At the Benecia auction, held in late February 1864, the successful bidder was Samuel McLenaghan. He first took the camels to his ranch in Sonoma County from whence he disposed of a number of them, retaining others for his own use in Nevada, about which more in the next installment. One of the purchasers from McLenaghan was our faithful camel devotee, Edward Beale, who placed them on his big ranch near Fort Tejon. Beale was frequently to be seen thereafter using a camel team



9. Beale Monument in Kingman, Arizona. Note silhouetted camel train at top. The other two sides have figures of wagons and cavalry. Courtesy of Elinor Follansbee.

to pull his sulky on trips to Los Angeles.²⁶

After the Confederates surrendered in the spring of 1865, the United States was once again in possession of Camp Verde and the camels still stationed at that Texas post. By then that group numbered sixty-six animals. Following discussions as to what to do with them, they too were ordered to the auction block, just like the ones in California three years earlier. Though the camels were at Camp Verde, the quartermaster in New Orleans conducted the sale. When the hammer fell on March 9, 1866 the successful bidder was Colonel Bethel Coopwood, a colorful character of the first water.

There were two Coopwood brothers, Bethel and Ben. Both were Texans of corpulent figure and adventuresome spirit. The gold fever had earlier taken them to California where Bethel, a lawyer, developed a lucrative practice. However, they were staunch pro-secessionists and constantly at odds with pro-Unionists in the newish Golden State.

After the war broke out, the Coopwoods headed back to Texas with a band of Southern sympathizers. Somewhere near the Texas/New Mexico border they came upon a Union patrol that included a string of fourteen camels. A skirmish ensued, from which the Southerners emerged victorious. We do not know the date of the encounter nor the exact circumstances. However, it is worthy to note that between July 1861 and July 1862 there was considerable

fighting between opposing forces in New Mexico Territory. It ranged all through the Rio Grande Valley from Ft. Bliss in the south to Santa Fe in the north with the Confederates taking and occupying both Albuquerque and Santa Fe.

The use of Union Army camel patrols in New Mexico Territory in a combat environment is not otherwise documented. To account for their presence we would suggest that they had been a part of the California herd and were stationed at a post such as Yuma, Mojave, or Defiance. Or, perhaps they were from the Texas group, some of which were said to have been at Fort Bliss (El Paso).²⁷ If there, they could have been taken westward or northward by retreating Union forces before the Confederates occupied that Texas post on July 3, 1861. Regardless, the Coopwoods emerged from the skirmish with the animals.

Ben Coopwood took the Yankee camels into Mexico while Bethel went to San Antonio. There he informed the Confederate authorities of his quadruped loot. Advised to keep them as spoils of war, he decided they had better stay south of the border lest the ultimate resolution of the conflict not be to his liking. And, he still had them in Mexico when he showed up stateside to bid on the Camp Verde animals. He took possession of them in San Antonio. After selling five to a circus that happened to be in town at the time (we have not yet discovered the name of this show), he took the remaining sixty-one to Mexico where they joined those that were his spoils from the recent unpleasantness. With his Mexican camels now numbering some seventy-odd animals, Coopwood used them in a freighting service between Laredo and Mexico City. It enjoyed a measure of success, but bandits constantly harassed the caravans. It became a losing proposition and was discontinued.

Bethel Coopwood then decided to bring his camels back into Texas. He figured the federal authorities would have forgotten about the ones he had seized during the New Mexico skirmish or maybe some sort of period of limitations had passed. Not so, he

was barely back when the "feds" seized his camels or at least fourteen of them, that being the number he had taken in New Mexico. Coopwood protested but to no avail. Disgustedly, he led his remaining animals south of the border for another go at the Mexican freighting business. Again it failed, and again he came back to his home state. He then settled down to practice law in San Antonio. He kept his camels at different farms in and near Austin and was even to be seen riding one of them to and from his office in San Antonio. As a sideline business, he bred and sold camels, and this went on until the mid or late 1880s when he disposed of the last ones.²⁸

In our next installment we tell about the camels of the western mining operations and explore the subject of camels with the circuses of the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

ERRATUM

There is a major error in the first installment, which your author must correct before proceeding further. On page 5, column 2, of Part I (*Bandwagon*, Vol. 42, No. 6, November-December 1998), "Ruth" is identified as the wife of the Patriarch Abraham. She was, of course, "Sarah." Inexplicably, your writer typed the wrong name just moments after checking the Biblical passage in Genesis, Chapter 12. This error managed to persist throughout all subsequent proof readings in both Atlanta, Georgia and Columbus, Ohio. However, within days of delivery of the magazine, several subscribers called the writer's attention to his mistake. He sincerely apologizes to all.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The writer wishes to thank all those who have helped so far in this continuing undertaking. It would not have been possible without the major and generous assistance of Eva Jolene Boyd of Ingram, Texas. Her wonderful book, *Noble Brutes--Camels on The American Frontier* (1995) is the most comprehensive on that subject known to your writer. Additionally, she has aided the author with many of her notes and graciously allowed reproduction of

the wonderful maps and illustrations from her collection.

Others have given notable help, not only regarding material for the first two parts but that yet to come as well. They include: Susan Anderson, Library Director, El Progreso Public Library, Uvalde, Texas; Beth Bahner, Registrar, Philadelphia Zoological Society; the late Ted Bowman, Hugo, Oklahoma; Fred W. Braid, Ballina, NSW, Australia; Donald R. Carson, Lomita, California; Fred Dahlinger



Jr., Director of Collections and Research, Circus World Museum, Baraboo, Wisconsin; Elizabeth S. Frank, Curator of Large Mammals, Milwaukee County Zoo; Dave Hale, 5-H Ranch, Cape Girardeau, Missouri; Marvin L. Jones, Registrar Emeritus, Zoological Society of San Diego; Vernon L. Kisling, Jr., Marston Science Library, University of Florida, Gainesville; Ken Kawata, general curator, Staten Island Zoological Society, New York; Gary A. LaValley, Archivist, Nimitz Library, United States Naval Academy, Annapolis, Maryland; James McCluney, Drum Barracks, Civil War Museum, Wilmington, California; Charles I. Meltzer, New Smyrna Beach, Florida; Nelson Morgan, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia Libraries, Athens, Georgia; the late Thomas P. Parkinson, Savoy, Illinois; Vickie M. Petree, R. J. Reynolds Tobacco Company, Winston Salem, North Carolina; Fred D. Pfening, III, Columbus, Ohio; John Polacsek, Detroit, Michigan; B. D. Roseboro, Forsyth County Public Library, Winston Salem, North Carolina; Dr. Richard P. Reading, Director of Conservation Biology, Denver Zoological Foundation; Professor Nigel Rothfels, University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee; Dr. William L. Slout, Professor Emeritus,

California State University, San Bernardino; Mark St. Leon, Leichardt, NSW, Australia; Dace Taub, Regional History Center, Department of Special Collections, University of Southern California, Los Angeles; and Stuart L. Thayer, Seattle, Washington.

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(Thayer 1972) Stuart Thayer, "The Egyptian Influence on the American Circus," *Bandwagon*, Vol. 16, no. 1, Jan-Feb 1972, pp. 18-21.

(Yancey 1995) Diane Yancey, *Camels for Uncle Sam*, Hedrick-Long Publishing Co., Dallas, TX (1995).

NOTES

1. The story told in this paper of Jefferson Davis' camel experiment, the importations, and the uses of the animals in California and Texas represents this writer's effort to synthesize and rationalize the accounts of those events as recorded in six major works on those subjects. They are Boyd 1995, Fleming 1909, Fowler 1950, Gray 1930, Hunter 1939,

and Yancey 1995. All agree about the essential facts. The notes that follow hereafter are used to point out differences in the six works, highlight points of importance, and cite sources other than those six.

2. Early in the discussions and debates over the feasibility of a transcontinental railroad, a thirteen-volume study of nine possible southern transcontinental railroad routes was completed. In 1853 Secretary of War Jefferson Davis presented it to the congressionally sponsored Pacific Railroad Convention. See: Bill Yenne, *The History of the Southern Pacific*, Bison Books Corp, Greenwich, CT (1985) p. 8.

3. Boyd 1995, p. 230, wrote that Porter was promoted to Vice Admiral in 1866, which was the year after he became Superintendent of the Naval Academy.

4. Boyd 1995, p. 38, wrote that 7 camels were aboard *Supply* when it left Egypt for Smyrna whereas Fowler 1950, p. 22, reported there were 10. We believe the latter is correct. That would make a total of 33 after the 23 were taken aboard in Smyrna. All except Gray 1930 agree that 33 animals were on *Supply* when it sailed away for America. Gray (p. 302) gave the number as 35, which would appear to be erroneous.

5. Boyd 1995, p. 59. Also Boyd, in litt., November 12, 1999, and e-mail December 1, 1999.

6. Boyd 1995, p. 90.

7. Joseph H. Engbeck, Jr., *Fort Tejon State Historic Park*, State of California, Dept. of Parks & Recreation, Sacramento (1991), pp. 4-7 and 12-14. And, August 26, 1998 interview with Robert Timmerman, History Department, Los Angeles Public Library, California.

8. Fleming 1909, p. 150; Hunter 1939, p. 20; and Thayer 1972, p. 19, all refer to the Watson camels as arriving on two ships. Boyd 1995, pp. 103-104 indicates there was only one.

9. Fleming 1909, p. 150, wrote that Mrs. Watson lived near Houston, Fowler 1950, p. 80, said she kept a stock ranch near Houston, and Thayer 1972, p. 19, referred to the "Watson Ranch near Houston." However, Boyd 1995 did not say anything about Mrs. Watson being a Texas landowner and wrote (p. 107) that in 1859 she and her ship "sailed away for ports unknown."

10. Hunter 1939, pp. 21-23.

11. *Ibid.*

12. Fleming 1909, p. 149.

13. Boyd 1995, p. 102 and Fowler 1950, p. 65.

14. Beale, Hartz and Echols took camels over the roughest, rockiest ground imaginable and wrote glowingly about their performance. (See: Boyd 1995, pp. 99 and 110-127). Therefore, the stoniness of the terrain would not appear to have been as big a problem in using camels in America's southwestern deserts as was the reluctance of the Army's enlisted men to use them regardless of conditions. Lieutenant Echols, however, did note that the camels' feet were badly hurt by the sharp rocks encountered in Texas's Big Bend country. He suggested protecting them with leather boots (Boyd 1995, p. 126). Others must have decided the same because there is a photograph of a camel train marching across a rocky desert (possibly in Arizona), and the animals are wearing leather boots. See: Douglas McDonald, *Camels in Nevada*, Nevada Publications, Las Vegas (1983), p. 24.

15. Anonymous, "Barnes' Camels in Fight-One Kills Another in Parade in Muskegon, Mich.," *Billboard*, July 31, 1920.

16. Charles I. Meltzer in litt, December 30, 1998 and February 9, 1999.

17. Crandall 1965, p. 547 and Grzimek 1972, pp. 136 and 143-144.

18. Grzimek 1972, p. 144.

19. Anonymous, "The First Twelve Years--Drum Barracks as a Military Post," *Drumbeats*, Drum Barracks Civil War Museum, Wilmington, CA, Spring 1987, p. 3.

20. Fowler 1950, p. 20; McCluney 1998; Thayer 1972, p. 20; and George R. Stammerjohan, "The Camels at Fort Tejon," unpublished (?) manuscript, p. 3.

21. McCluney 1998.

22. McCluney 1998; Anonymous, "The Great Camel Experiment," *Drumbeats*, Drum Barracks Civil War Museum, Wilmington, CA, Vol 11, No. 4, October 1988, pp. 6-7; Boyd 1995, p. 154; and Fowler 1950, p. 72.

23. Boyd 1995, pp. 230-231.

24. Boyd 1995, p. 167; Fleming 1909, p. 151; Fowler 1950, p. 85; and Yancey 1995 pp. 61-62.

25. Fowler 1950, p. 72-73 and Gray 1930, p. 308.

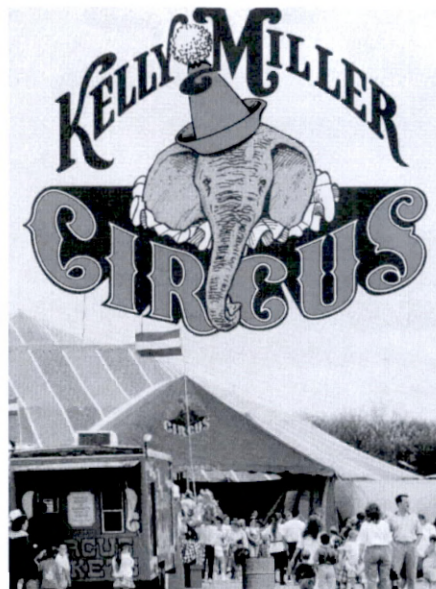
26. Gray 1930, pp. 308-310.

27. Fleming 1909, p. 149 referred to camels stationed at the Army post in El Paso. That would have been Fort Bliss.

28. Boyd 1995, pp. 168-173. A movie, *The Texas Funeral*, based in part on the exploits of Bethel Coopwood and starring actor Martin Sheen has recently been filmed in Texas. Awaiting release, it was directed by Blake Herron who happens to be the great-great-great-great grandson of Bethel Coopwood.

Season's Greetings

to all our old
and new
Friends



TO ALL OUR CIRCUS FRIENDS

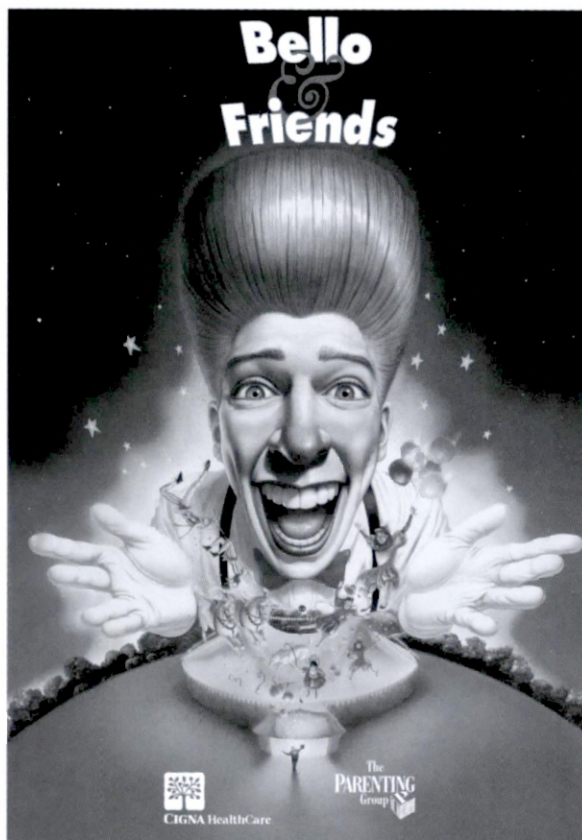
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Movie Cowboys and the Circus

By Fred D. Pfening, Jr.

At the end of the 1920s outdoor under canvas shows began hiring well known motion picture western stars as feature attractions.

During the golden age of the Hollywood western films in the 1920s and 1930s the big five stars were Tom Mix, Buck Jones, Ken Maynard, Hoot Gibson and Tim McCoy. All were featured with circuses. A number of them worked with circuses before their film careers started. Some started their own circus or wild west show. Other than Mix all their shows failed quickly.

Tom Mix (1890-1940) was the best known of the group. He joined Miller Bros. 101 Ranch Wild West in 1905 and worked with the Miller show for a number of years. Around 1909 he was with W. S. Dickey's Circle C Ranch Wild West. Dickey had a connection with the Selig Polyscope Company, an early producer of western films. Mix made his first

Tom Mix on Sells-Floto Circus in 1931. All illustrations are from author's collection unless otherwise credited.



film for Selig in 1909. When the Selig studios closed Mix went to William Fox Productions.

During his career he appeared in nearly 400 motion pictures. Over half of them were made by Selig and Fox, but he also worked for Universal, Film Box Office and Mascot. In his early movie career he worked during the summers with the Kit Carson Buffalo Ranch Wild West and the Young Buffalo Wild West.

He survived the change to talking pictures and made his last film in 1935 for the "poverty row" Mascot Pictures. In the 1920s he was one of the leading box office stars in Hollywood. In 1929 he went to work for the Sells-Floto Circus and remained for three years. In 1934 he joined the Sam B. Dill motorized circus. In 1935 Mix bought the show and continued the Tom Mix Circus through 1938. At its height the show was the largest and most successful circus on the road. He made a number of successful tours of Europe before being killed in an car crash in 1940.

Charles Frederick Gebhard aka Buck Jones, 1891-1942) was with Miller Bros. 101 Ranch Wild West in 1913 and Gollmar Bros. Circus in 1914.

Adopting the name Charles Jones he made his first film for Fox in 1918. He later became Buck Jones. He produced and directed many of the films in which he appeared.

During his career Jones appeared in nearly 200 movies produced by Fox, Columbia, Universal, Paramount, Republic and Monogram. His last film was for Monogram Pictures in 1941.

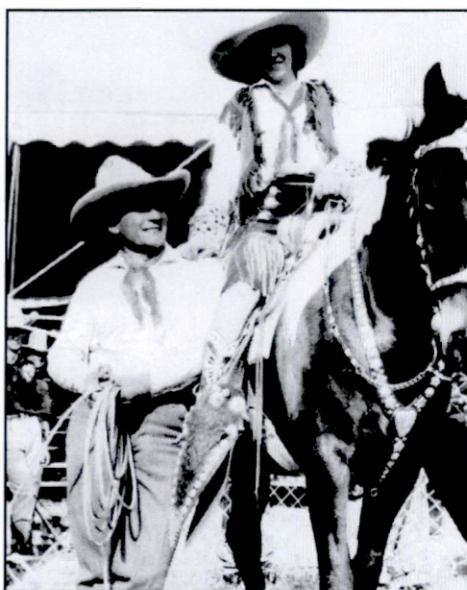
In 1929 he organized the

Buck Jones Wild West and Round Up Days. Monte Montana, a rodeo and motion picture personality, was with the Jones show. It opened on May 16 and lasted until July, when his business partner absconded with all the show's money, leaving Jones high and dry. Jones quickly joined the Robbins Bros. Circus to finish the season. He died in Boston in the 1942 Coconut Grove night club fire.

Ken Maynard (1895-1973) was with the Kit Carson Buffalo Ranch Wild West in 1913 and with Ringling Bros. in 1914, and later with the Hagenbeck-Wallace Circus. His first film was for William Fox in 1923. His last film was in 1970. His film career consisted 109 films produced by Columbia, Universal, M-G-M, World Wide, Tiffany, Mascot, First National, Monogram and Astor.

In 1936 Maynard bought wagons and rail cars from George Christy and organized the Ken Maynard

Mr. and Mrs. Buck Jones on his wild west show in 1929. Joe Rettinger collection.





Hoot Gibson on Wallace Bros. Circus in 1937.

Diamond K. Wild West Circus and Indian Congress. The show opened in Van Nyes, California and lasted a couple of weekends. The following year he was featured with the Cole Bros.-Clyde Beatty Circus. He remained in 1938 and then came back to Cole in 1940. In 1950 he appeared with the Biller Bros. Circus.

Col. Timothy John Fitzgerald McCoy (1891-1978) was born in Saginaw, Michigan, but grew up on a ranch in Wyoming. He served as a Lt. Colonel in World War I. In 1926 he staged the Winning of the West at the Sesqui-Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia. In 1942 he was the Republican candidate for the U.S. senate, but was defeated.

His his first film *The Covered Wagon* was made for Famous Players-Lasky in 1923.

Tim McCoy on Ringling-Barnum in 1935.

His film career consisted of 96 films produced by Universal, Columbia, M-G-M, Producers Releasing Corporation, Puritan, Victory and Embassy. McCoy's best silents were made for M-G-M as their top western actor.



His last featured role was for Monogram Pictures in 1942. In 1965 at age 80 he was featured in *Requiem for a Gun Fighter*, produced by Embassy Pictures.

In 1935 Sam Gumpertz hired McCoy to produce and star in a wild west after show for Ringling-Barnum. He returned in 1936 and 1937.

McCoy was paid \$10,000 a week and he in turn paid all the aftershow personnel.

Assuming he was responsible for the big show crowds, McCoy made plans to tour his own wild west show in 1938. And what a beautiful show it was. New from rail cars to

wagons, it was one of the finest new outfits to be introduced in the 20th century. In competition with Cole Bros. and Hagenbeck-Wallace, it opened at the International Amphitheater in Chicago on April 14. Three big shows in one city at the same time did not allow any of them to do outstanding business. After ten days in Chicago McCoy's forty blue and white rail cars made a Sunday run of 315 miles to open under canvas in Columbus, Ohio. One week later the show closed in Washington, D.C., where it was sold at auction. The venture cost McCoy \$400,000, just about wiping him out.

McCoy went back to Hollywood and more poverty row pictures. But in spite of his age he again went back to the circus, this time with the Al G. Kelly & Miller Bros. in 1957. The following season he joined the Carson & Barnes Circus where he remained through 1961. During the first two months of the 1962 season McCoy appeared with the Hoxie-Bardex Circus. He partnered with the Tommy Scott's medicine show later in 1962 and remained for thirteen years.

The last of the Hollywood big timers was Edward



Jack Hoxie on Mills Bros. Circus in 1947.

Richard Gibson (1892-1963). He was an accomplished rodeo performer at age sixteen. He, too, had outdoor show business experience prior to entering the movies. Hoot Gibson was with Dick Stanley's Congress of Rough Riders and Bud Atkinson's Circus & Wild West in Australia. He competed in the Pendleton Round Up and the New York Stampede in 1916.

His film career began in 1910 for Selig and lasted through 120 features. He worked for Selig, Universal, RKO-Radio, Monogram and Screen Guild. In 1936 he was one of the top money western stars. His last film was made in 1947 by Screen Guild Pictures.

Gibson was featured by Wallace Bros. Circus early in 1937 and then joined the Hagenbeck-Wallace show for the rest of the season. In 1938 he was with Robbins Bros. Circus and in 1939 was with Russell Bros. In 1940 he organized the Hoot Gibson Rodeo and Thrill Circus. The show opened on July 7 playing ball parks. It did not last long.

Jack Hoxie (nee John F. Stone, 1885-1965) was born in Oklahoma and grew up as a cowhand. He won the National Riding Championship in 1914. It is thought he was with the Kit Carson Buffalo Ranch in 1914. His first movie job was as a stunt man.

His first of 79 films was made in 1915 and last in 1933. Hoxie quit films entirely in 1934 because he



Reb Russell on Russell Bros. in 1937.

was unable to memorize the dialogue required by the talkies.

Hoxie spent more time with circuses than any other western star and was with more shows. He began in 1929 with the Miller Bros. 101 Ranch Wild West.

In 1931 he was with Schell Bros. In 1933 and 1934 he was with Downie Bros. In 1935 he was with the Harley Sadler show and returned to Downie in 1936. In the spring of 1937 Cy Newton framed a new circus in Raymond, Georgia and induced Hoxie to invest in the show and be the feature. It was built new from the ground up. Titled Jack Hoxie's Circus, it closed abruptly early in July when Newton departed. Hoxie enlisted the help of R. M. Harvey and reopened the circus on July 31. Hoxie left the show in September and it quickly closed for the second time.

Hoxie was back with Downie Bros. in 1938. In 1939 he was with Lewis Bros. and with Bud Anderson in 1940. He ended his circus career with Mills Bros. in 1946 and 1947.

Buck Owens, a champion rodeo performer, began his circus career with Sells-Floto in 1927. He was with Robbins Bros. in 1930. He continued with Downie Bros. in 1932, Hunt's Circus in 1933 and Lewis Bros. in 1934. Owens came back to the sawdust arena with Si Rubens to tour the Buck Owens Circus in 1946 and 1947. Although he was advertised as

a famous western screen star no mention has been found of him in motion picture reference books.

Lafayette H. "Reb" Russell (1905-1978) was a former All-American fullback at Northwestern University. He was enticed to Hollywood in 1932 by Universal Pictures to play bit parts. His first featured film was in 1935 and last in 1940. He was with Russell Bros. Circus in 1936 and with Downie Bros. in 1937.

Ray W. Rogers alternated the Barnett and Wallace Bros. circus titles. He featured a number of movie cowboys. Harry Carey (nee Henry DeWitt, 1878-1946) made his first film in 1909 for the Biograph studios and appeared in a number of D. W. Griffith pictures. His biggest film was *Trader Horn* in 1931. Carey was with Barnett in 1934.

Tom Tyler (nee Vincent Markowski, 1903-1954) made his first of 173 films in 1924 and last in 1953. His films were made by F. B. O, M-G-M and RKO. He was featured with Wallace Bros. in 1937.

William Desmond (1878-1949) made his first film in 1915 and his last in 1940. In 1938 he was featured with Barnett Bros.

Lee Berrien Powell (1908-1944) appeared in the first Lone Ranger motion picture in 1938. That same year he made another serial for Republic. As a contract Republic player he received \$150 a week. Powell was set for a second Lone Ranger serial, however, he wanted more money. Republic said no and placed Robert Livingston in the part. He moved to Grand National

Buck Owens on Sells-Floto in 1926. Circus World Museum collection.



Lee Powell on Barnett Bros. Circus in 1939.

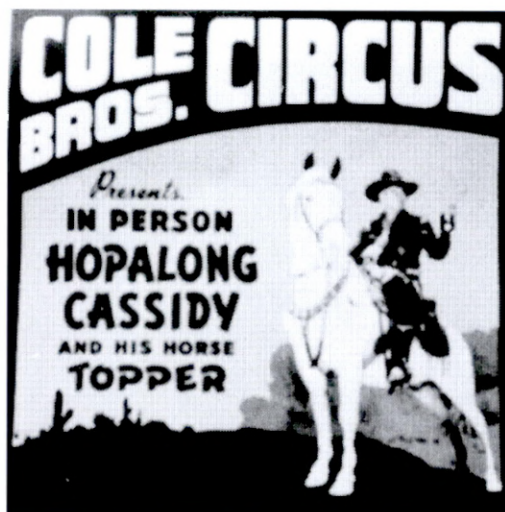
Pictures where he made B serials in 1939.

With no more Hollywood work in the offing, he joined Barnett Bros. Circus in 1939. He was with Wallace Bros., Barnett with a new title, in 1940 and 1941. Advertising himself as the original Lone Ranger he faced legal problems with the copyright owners of the name but continued using it. While on the show he married the boss' daughter, Norma Rogers.

Returning to Hollywood in 1940 he had a part in a *Flash Gordon* picture at Universal. His final six films were made by Producers Releasing Corporation in 1941 and 1942. He enlisted in the Marines and was killed in the Marina Islands on July 30, 1944.

The Lone Ranger name was owned by The Lone Ranger Inc. It started on a Detroit radio station in the early 1930s. The company placed a "Lone Ranger," played by an unidentified person, on the Olympia Circus, operated by the Chicago Stadium Corporation, in Chicago and Detroit in 1941.

Bill Cody (nee William Joseph, Jr., 1891-1948), a Canadian, made his first of twenty-six films in 1925. James Heron's 1932 *Walter L. Main* Circus featured Cody. The Cody Ranch Wild West name was added to the title in May. By late June it was Bill Cody Ranch Wild West. By August the title became Bostock's



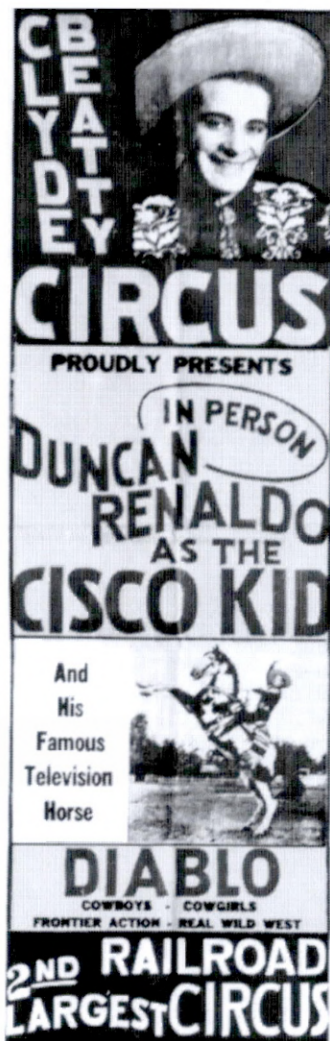
Window card of William Boyd used by Cole Bros. in 1950.

Circus and Cody Ranch Wild West. By September it was back to Walter L. Main and Cody Ranch Wild West. Cody was the Downie Bros. western star in 1935.

Buzz Barton (1914-1980) made his first western movie at age ten and was known as the boy stunt rider for Film Booking Office studios. He had been discovered at the Cheyenne Frontier Days in 1927. His last film was made in 1940. In 1933 he was featured on Heron's Walter L. Main Circus.

Duncan Renaldo poster used by Clyde Beatty in 1956.

Alfred "Lash" LaRue (1917-1996), a minor Hollywood cowboy, appeared in thirty films starting in 1945, usually playing second banana roles for Producers Releasing Corporation, Eagle-Lion, Western Adventures Productions and Screen Guild. His last film was made in 1950. He was featured with Dales Bros. Circus in 1949. Later he was with Rogers Bros.



Bob Steele (nee Robert North Bradbury, Jr., 1906-1988) began his cowboy film career in 1927 and progressed to become one of Republic Studios B western top drawing stars. His career included 179 films. He appeared in a TV series from 1965 to 1967. Steele was featured with the Clyde Beatty Circus during the early part of the 1950 season.

Art Mix appeared in at least one film in 1932. He was featured with Kay Bros. in 1937, Cole Bros. in 1939, Kay Bros. in 1941 and the short lived Terrell Jacobs show in 1944.

He was the star of the short lived Buffalo Ranch Wild West in 1947.

Doug Autry, a brother of Gene, was featured by Dailey Bros. in 1949 and by Clyde Beatty in 1955. Although Autry was advertised as a movie cowboy no reference has been found of his appearing in a film.

Nearly all of western stars, most born in the 1890s, were in the declining years of their motion picture careers when they were with circuses. Many found work in the 1930s at poverty row producers like Renslow, Majestic, Freuler, Argosy, Victory, Ascot, Mascot, World Wide, Embassy and Screen Guild. Some of these cheap "B" westerns were made in as little as five days.

William Boyd (1895-1972) made 139 pictures. His first film appearance was in 1919 as an extra for Cecil B. DeMille. He was in a number of DeMille's silent films and worked up to a feature player in



Clyde Beatty advertised Doug Autry in 1955. Circus World Museum collection.

the 1920s. In 1935 he starred in the first Hopalong Cassidy film and continued in the series through 1943. His last picture was the *Greatest Show on Earth* in 1953 in a cameo role.

In 1950 Arthur Wirtz, owner of the Chicago Stadium, operated Cole Bros. Circus which featured Hopalong Cassidy. He was the hottest name in television at the time.

Duncan Renaldo (1904-1980) made his first film in 1928 and last in 1959. His partner was Leo Carrillo (1880-1961). Renaldo and Carrillo appeared with the Cole Bros. in Chicago in 1953. They were the Cisco Kid and Poncho, featured with the Tom Packs' ball park circus in 1954. When the Clyde Beatty Circus opened in California in 1956 it featured Renaldo. He did not remain with the show very long. For a short time Renaldo was with James Bros. in the late 1950s.

Kirby Grant (nee Kirby Grant Hoon, Jr., 1911-1985) made his first of fifty films in 1939. His last was in 1954. In 1953 he jumped into the lime light as Sky King on television, making a total of 130 episodes. From 1965 to 1969 he was featured on the Carson & Barnes Circus for Jack Moore and D. R. Miller. Grant was the last Hollywood personality to be



Poster used by the Col. Tim McCoy show in 1938.

featured with a circus.

By the early 1940s the major studios were making big budget western films, most in color. The new wave singing cowboys were finding a home in Hollywood. None of the new western heroes had been with circuses, but some later hit the rodeo circuit. Some were recruited by Col. Jim Eskew, the most successful producer of contest rodeos in the early 1940s.

Roy Rogers 1947 program cover.



Gene Autry (1907-1998) was working as a railroad telegrapher when Will Rogers heard him sing. He started singing on the radio in 1928 and by 1934 had appeared in a Ken Maynard film. Autry's first starring role was in 1935. He was a top box office star from 1938 to 1942. While Autry was in the army Republic Pictures featured Roy Rogers as its number one singing cowboy. After the war Autry went back to work for Columbia Pictures. During his film career he made 96 movies.

In 1941 Autry was featured in the Jim Eskew World's Championship Rodeo playing arenas across the country. Cleveland, Ohio, for example, was played from April 18 to 27. In 1942 Gene Autry's Flying A Ranch Stampede premiered on April 9 in Cleveland.

The other big movie singing cowboy was Roy Rogers (nee Leonard Franklin Slye, 1911-1998). Ironically his first movie appearance was in a Gene Autry film in 1935. By 1942 he was a big name and continued making films into the early 1950s. Switching to television the Roy Rogers and Dale Evans show lasted from 1951 to 1957. He returned to the silver screen in 1975. He made a total of 112 movies.

Rogers joined with Eskew to tour the Roy Rogers' Rodeo in 1946. He brought Bob Nolan and the Sons of the Pioneers with him to the show. In 1947 he joined Tom Packs for the Roy Rogers Thrill Circus. This show included the Statosphere Man, Victoria Zacchini's cannon act, the Antalek's perch act, Mark Smith's horses and Terrell Jacobs' wild animal act. The Sons of the Pioneers rounded out the performance. The show played the usual Packs ball part circuit.

William "Wild Bill" Elliott (1903-1965) was a rodeo performer before making his first of 135 films in 1925. In his final Hollywood years he made a number of films for Monogram. Most of his most successful films were made at Republic Pictures. His last film was made in 1957.

Elliott also was featured by Jim Eskew's rodeo during the early 1940s.

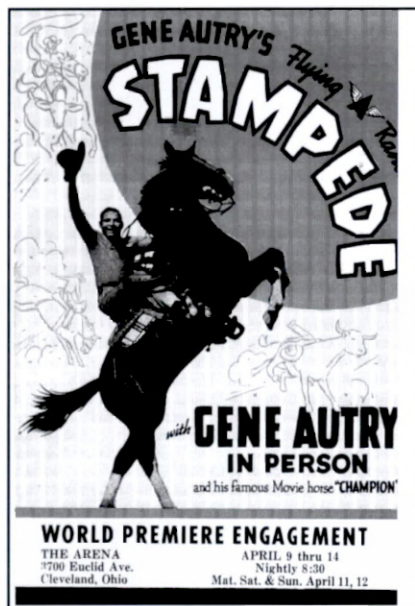


Biller Bros. Circus window card featured Ken Maynard in 1950.

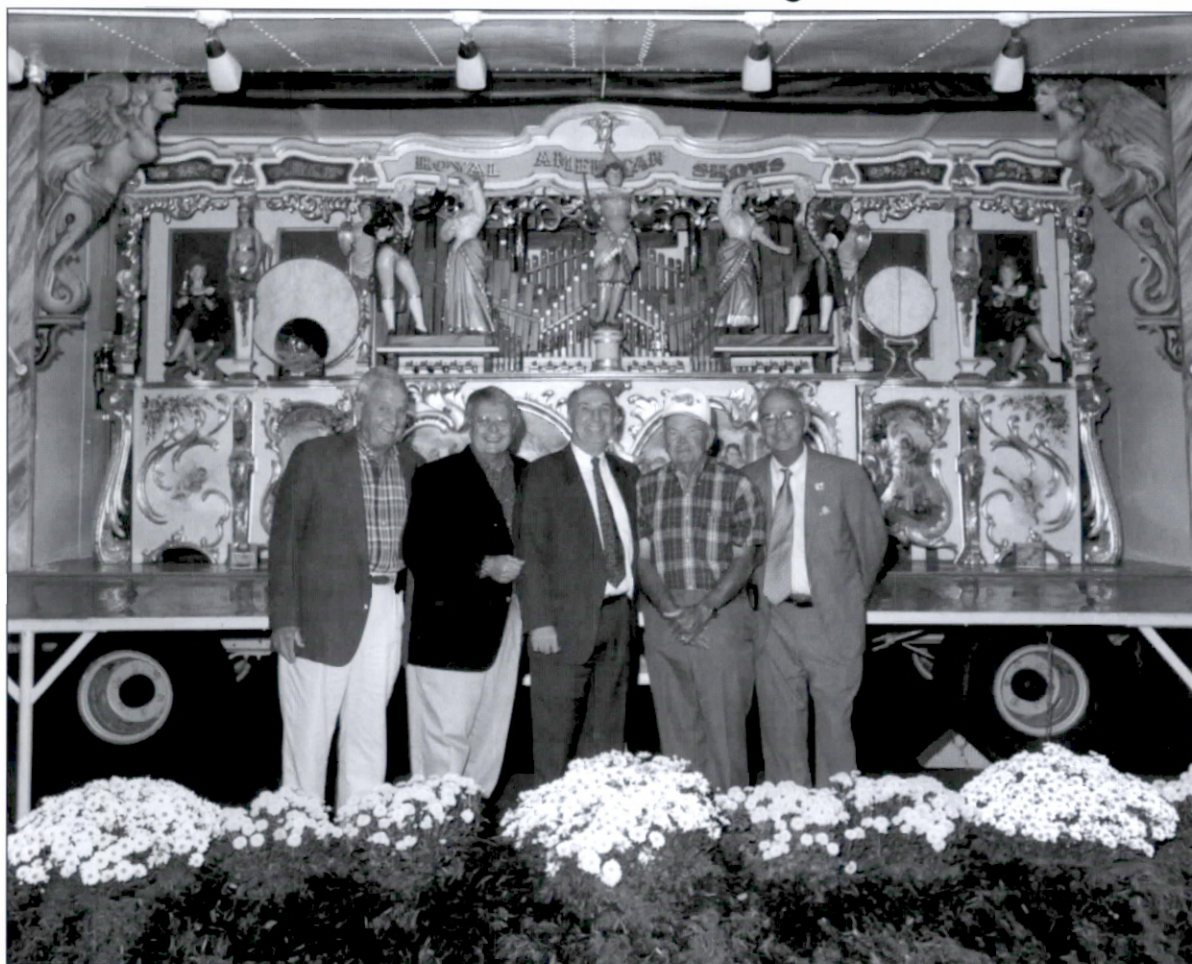
Art Accord (1890-1933) was an early movie western star along with William S. Hart. During his film career he participated in many contest rodeos.

Mario DeMarco, Chuck Anderson and Donn Moyer provided material for this article. Other information came from the internet and various books about movie cowboys.

Gene Autry's 1942 program cover.



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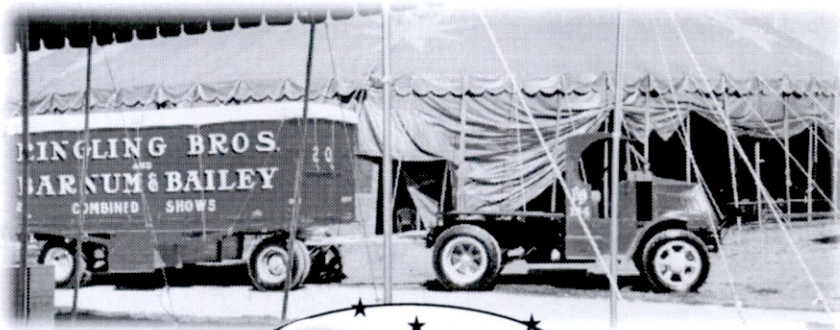
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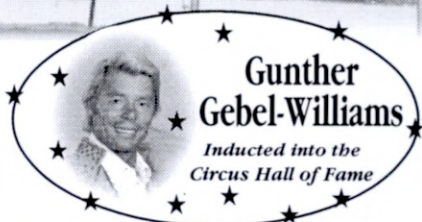
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RICE BROS. CIRCUS

Season of 1934

By Joseph T. Bradbury

Foreword

The King brothers, Floyd and Howard, were players in the drama of the American circus throughout the first half of the 20th century. Floyd was active in the business until only a few years before his death in 1976.

Howard was born in 1884 and Floyd four years later. However, Floyd is far better known to the franturnity than his older brother. Floyd's life in show business is documented in the numerous interviews he gave Tom Parkinson. The latest major article on him was in the November-December 1996 and January-February 1997 Bandwagon. By contrast, there have been few stories about Howard King.

The first information we have about Howard dates from 1916 and 1917 when he was handling inside ticket sales on the John Robinson Circus. In 1918 he was in the red ticket wagon on Hagenbeck-Wallace.

In 1919 the two brothers, along with George Atkinson and William Godfrey, bought the two car Campbell Bros. Circus from William P. (High Grass) Campbell. They put it on the road as Sanger's Great European Circus, because lithographs with that title were available from a printing house. Atkinson and Godfrey were soon out and the Kings were sole owners.

In 1921 the Sanger paper ran out and they switched to Hugo Bros. because that paper was available. In 1922 a third car was added and a deal was made with M. L. Clark who joined the Kings, adding an elephant and other equipment, as well as his title.

In 1923 they bought a tunnel car from Charles Sparks and called their show Rice Bros., again since paper was available. In later years Floyd



Mr. and Mrs. Howard King in 1956. Pfening Archives.

said that the Rice name was the best of the printing house titles.

In 1924 their five car show was called Harris Bros. They moved into the flat car class in 1925 with a ten car operation called Walter L. Main. At the end of that season they bought the Gentry-Patterson Circus.

In 1926 they fielded both the 15 car Walter L. Main and the 10 car Gentry Bros. shows. The operating of two railers continued through 1929, with the titles switched at times

Letterhead used by Rice Bros. in 1934. It is printed in red and blue. Pfening Archives.

between the two shows. The Gentry show folded in the fall of 1929. This left the brothers with only the 10 car Cole Bros. show. It went broke in early August of 1930, another victim of the depression. Floyd went to work as a press agent for Al G. Barnes. In 1934 he moved to the Hagenbeck-Wallace Circus.

Little is known about Howard King's circus activities from 1931 to 1933. He was married to Gladys Taulbee, a former Ziegfeld girl, known on the rail shows as "Angel Face."

1934 Rice Bros. Circus

By 1934 the depression had eased gradually after the economy hit rock bottom in July 1932. There was some improvement in the fall of 1932 and 1933 was better. George Christy whose railroad show failed in 1930, got back in the business with a motorized Lee Bros. in 1933 for a short tour. After reorganization he toured a full season in 1934.

Howard King felt it was time to do likewise and made plans to launch a medium motorized circus for the 1934 season. Floyd did not join him, continuing as a press agent on the Barnes circus.

Three rail show operators who failed in 1930 and 1931 were all associated with motorized circus when they returned to the business a few seasons later. In addition to Christy



and Howard King, Fred Buchanan, whose Robbins Bros. railer went broke in 1931, was connected with Jimmy Heron's World Bros. Circus in 1934. Elmer Jones was the exception when he returned in 1936 with a two railroad car Cooper Bros. Circus.

The March 10, 1934 *Billboard* provided the first notice of Howard's new show: "Kings launching a 14 truck circus show. Louisville, Kentucky, March 3.

"Mr. and Mrs. Howard are planning to launch a 15 truck circus from this city in April. They returned here from Texas about a month ago.

"Mr. King stated he was not ready to furnish details because some equipment matters are pending, but he informed that the title will be Rice Bros. Circus and that it will have a band of 15 pieces and a calliope."

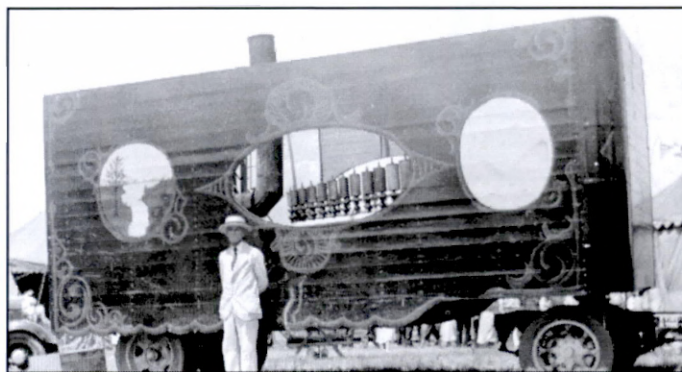
The March 24 *Billboard* contained this advertisement: "Rice Bros. Circus can place experienced agent with own car. Dog and pony act, bounding wire, clown with jargo, musician who can play air calliope with band. O'Neal trio, Dalbeanie wire. Preference given those with own transportation. Louisville, Kentucky."

A short note in the following week's *Billboard* reported Jack Mills had arrived in Louisville and would have the banners on Rice Bros. On April 7 it was announced that John H. "Doc" Oyler would have the annex.

Rice Bros. newspaper ad used in Shelbyville, Kentucky in 1934. Bill Rhodes collection.

The April 28 *Billboard* gave considerable information about the new show with headlines, "Rice Bros. set for its opening.

"Rice Bros. Circus is ready to open the season at Shelbyville, Kentucky



E. E. Coleman and his steam calliope on Rice in 1934. Author's collection.

on April 25 after a rehearsal there the preceding day.

"The new show was assembled in Louisville at Fontaine Ferry Park.

"From 1923 to 1929 when King and his brother Floyd were in business they wintered their circuses in this city.

"The transportation equipment is new Chevrolet trucks purchased through a local agency. Animals include an elephant, two lions, a camel, a bear, a cage of monkeys, ponies and two menage horses. Prices will be 25 and 50 cents.

"I got out of the show business at a good time, but I couldn't stay out of it," Mr. King said. "The outlook for this year is fine and I believe this will be a great circus season."

"Mrs. King is secretary-treasurer; F. L. 'Kokomo' Anders, legal adjuster; Ben R. Jones, contracting agent; A. C. Bradley, press agent; George L. Meyers, equestrian director; Homer Lee, band conductor; Harry L. Lippman, concession superintendent; Doc Oyler, side show manager; A. C. Harrison, side show tickets; Irish Deady, ticket seller; F. L. Buckner, canvas boss; T. W. Perry,

mechanic; Don Taylor, side show inside lecturer; G. Winy, pit show and William Fuller, side show band

director. Acts include Merrill troupe, acrobats, globe act and leaps; Frank Satio, hand balancing; Joseph White and family, clowns; Duval's dogs; Gaylord Thomas, wire; Joe Gould and George Weyman, clowns; Bill Leon, concert wrestler and Cleo Cavanaugh, animals and menage

horse."

Locating information on Rice Bros. has been difficult. After a wide search no photographs of the show have been found.

Bill Rhodes, of Louisville, Kentucky, provided information on the location of the winter quarters and investigated early Louisville Chevrolet dealerships.

Rhodes was familiar with Fontaine Ferry Park. It was a big old Coney Island style amusement complex that dated back to the turn of the century. It had rides, a big swimming pool, night club and skating rink. As a child he visited the park a number of times and recalled riding a camel and an elephant. He was acquainted with the Senneiser family who owned the park and he had access to areas not open to the public.

Rhodes remembered little unused space and questioned how a circus could winter there without shops and other necessary housing space.

Rhodes talked with a retired Chevrolet dealer whose family still operates three dealerships in the Louisville area. He was advised that no current dealer was in business in 1934. He concluded that trucks came from Brower-Hoskins, located on Third Street in downtown Louisville. That firm ceased business in the late 1930s.

Chevrolet trucks of that period were light weights. The six cylinder engines were intended for passenger cars and had only three main bearings and many parts were lubricated by little dippers on the rods which splashed oil on them. They were not heavy duty. Because of the light design twice as many units were required as would be today.

E. E. Coleman's large elephant, Mena, joined the show for the open-

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ing. King leased the elephant and a semi-trailer to haul her. Mena had been imported from the Hagenbeck Zoo in Hamburg, Germany in 1891 by the M. L. Clark show. She had been with the Clark show until it was sold to Coleman in August 1930. At that time she walked between stands. In 1931 Coleman built a large semi-trailer for her transportation. It was an open top vehicle, lettered "Mena, largest female elephant in America."

King also leased a steam calliope from Coleman. In 1933 Coleman built a semi-trailer and installed an instrument from a river boat. Well known calliope player Deacon Albright came along with the calliope to Rice Bros. The Rice show was the first circus to use the Coleman steamer. It is almost certainly first circus to use a steamer in a semi-trailer.

The 1934 spring issue of *White Tops* reported the Gonzales troupe would be featured by Rice Bros. A handout published by the Shelby, Kentucky *News* on April 12 mentioned the wire walking duo of Rosita and Armita, with a photo of the young ladies on the wire. The article stated that the girls had come to Rice from a tiny Mexican wagon show.

Rice Bros. opened the season at the ball park in Shelbyville, Kentucky, on April 25, 1934, billed as Rice Bros. 3 Ring Shows. The show used the 1934 *Circus Magazine*, *Wild West* and *Animal Review* as a program sold on the show. The completely fabricated article about Rice Bros. read: "This season marks the forty-seventh annual tour of the renowned Rice Bros. Circus, one of the world's highest class amusement institutions. During each of its forty-seven consecutive show years Rice Bros. has always presented a program of clean, novel and educational entertainment."

"This year, bigger and better than ever, Rice Bros. Circus brings to the American public a great show featuring such well known artists as Captain Frank Zonga and Miss Wallace with their trained liberty



Elephant Mena on Duggan Bros. Circus in Parsons, Kansas after having left the Rice show in 1934. Author's collection.

ponies; Sakroto, Japanese acrobat and equilibrist; Captain John Schwarz and Miss Dolly Bell with their herds of marvelously trained performing elephants; Bill Bailey, famous clown and his merry gang of fun provokers; Frank Sakroto, Japanese equilibrist; Frank and Jesse Hollingsworth, sensational riders; Miss Beimi Slaughter and her wonderful flock of trained pigeons; Spot Brown, comedy hurdle rider; Sascurum on the bounding rope, an amazing performance; The Riding Atkinsons, Tommy, Don and Bill, Jr.; Ellen Saunders, a dainty and demure aerial butterfly from continental Europe; The Four Masons, The North Trio and the Brooks Duo, comedy acrobats; the Rice Bros. group of high school horses; Harry Heaney's funny clown band; Harold and Ellen Saunders, wire artists in daring, difficult and graceful acrobatic achievements on the steel thread suspended in mid-air high above the heads of the audience; the Gonzalez Troupe of acrobats and aerialists direct from Mexico and many others."

With the absence of photos it is difficult to describe the equipment. A show this size probably used an 80 foot round top with three 30s or 40s. A combination side show-menagerie was probably a 60 with three 20s. A small dressing tent, a cookhouse and a midway pit show likely completed the canvas layout. In all probability all the motor vehicles were straight bed trucks with the exception of the two semi-trailers leased from Coleman. Three or four small truck-mounted cages would have been suf-

ficient to carry the wild animals listed in the April 28 *Billboard* report.

Following the opening, the next few weeks were played in Kentucky, territory familiar to King, as his rail shows often played that state.

The May 12 *Billboard* said Rice Bros. had overflow attendance in Richmond, Kentucky. The article also stated the

advance crew had billed Somerset, Kentucky for May 2. The advance included S. S. Brewer, special agent and acting car manager; J. A. Rettig, boss billposter; Carl Gibson, boss lithographer; L. C. Landhart and A. M. Jerwin, billposters; and Earl Brewer and Earl Robbins, lithographers.

Other Kentucky dates were London, May 3; Corbin, 4; Evarts, 8; Cumberland, 9; Jenkins, 10; Hazard, 11; and Whitesburg, 12. The show moved into West Virginia on May 22 at Laeger, followed by Davy, Gary, Mayberry and Pochontas.

The next *Billboard* reference to Rice Bros. appeared in the June 9 issue: "Rice Bros. Circus, new to this territory, makes its Eastern Ohio debut in Alliance on June 11. It will be the second in of the season. Barnett Bros. having played here on May 2."

The only other known stand in Ohio was Caldwell on June 6. The show returned to West Virginia at Sistersville on June 13.

The opposition with Barnett Bros. was the only one mentioned in *Billboard*, but surely there were others. More circuses were on the road than had been in several seasons. Only three railers were touring, all Ringling owned, Ringling-Barnum on 90 cars, Hagenbeck-Wallace on 46 cars and Al G. Barnes on 30 cars. Four of the largest motorized shows, Downie Bros., Sam B. Dill-Tom Mix, Barnett Bros., and Seils-Sterling, all paraded. Others on the road were Mighty Haag, Russell Bros., Lewis Bros., Gorman Bros., Schell Bros., Curtis-Gregg, Almond & Conley, Gentry Bros., Charles T. Hunt, Seal Bros., Beverly Bros., Conroy Bros., Kay Bros., Silver Bros., Lee Bros.,

Milliken Bros., A. M. Reed, Olinger Bros., Cole & Rice, Cooper Bros., Harrington-Pawnee Bill, (later to become Duggan Bros.,) World Bros., Irvin Bros., Beers-Barnes, R. L. Atterbury, Lamont Bros., Fowler Bros., Henry Bros., and Toll Bros.

Route card No. 6 listed four West Virginia stands starting in Glenville on June 18. On June 22 the show played Oakland, Maryland then returned to West Virginia at Kingwood on June 22. Brownsville, Pennsylvania was played on June 25.

Billboard published this report on July 7 issue: "Jeanette, Pennsylvania, June 30. On its 10th week of the season Rice Bros. Circus is invading Pennsylvania territory, playing small towns bordering large cities. It travels on 44 vehicles, including 12 new Chevrolet trucks. Of late some rain has been encountered but the show went on just the same. A storm in Oakland, Maryland last Friday did some damage to the big top, but this was repaired before curtain time.

"The big show program: Tournament; Merrill troupe using Mena, and 4 ponies; Kelly's bucking mule; Kelly's pony drill, worked by Cleo Cavanaugh; clowns; Bernice Kelly, swinging ladder; Kelly's acrobats; elephant worked by Dan Reynolds; Frank Satiro, aerial perch; riding dog and monkey, worked by Pat Kelly; Jane Merrill, single traps; football kicking pony; June Merrill, girl in golden whirl; Gladys Merrill, rolling globe; Kelly's educated pony; Frank Satiro, head balancing; Bernice Kelly, tight wire; Kelly's high diving dogs; Merrill troupe, acrobats.

"The band: Homer F. Lee, leader, Oscar Duenweg, Tell Rumbaugh, John Higgins, Joe Bill Bantry, Louis F. Shaw, Bob Leas, Fred G. Brewster, Frank A. Bailey, Lawrence Leas, Ray Smith and James Mooney.

"The side show: Doc Oyler, manager; D. Phillipson and Monte Lovelace, tickets and talkers; Dad Harrison, openings; Madam Mill (Mrs. Oyler), mentalist; Mrs. Dola Lee, reptiles; Eddie Cuhn, midget; Tex Estridge, tattoo artist; Don Taylor, lecturer,



This semi-trailer was used to transport Mena. Coleman built the trailer after acquiring Mena from the M. L. Clark show in 1930. Author's collection.

magic and punch. Hazel Cook, Ethel Cook, Marie Brown and Ethel Forrest, dancers; Willis Fuller, minstrels including J. T. Irwin, comedian; Florence Sersey, singer and a five piece band. The side show also displays a number of animals. Robert L. Wing is manager of the pit show, titled Juanita, with Ethel Wing as lecturer and Jefferson and Lee Flotto as assistants.

"The staff includes Howard King, manager; Mrs. Howard King, secretary-treasurer; A. C. Bradley, tickets and press; F. L. Anders, legal adjuster assisted by Jack Doyle; Ben Jones, contracting agent; George L. Meyers, equestrian director; L. L. Buckley, superintendent; Bob Chancy, electrician; E. Q. Perry, mechanic; S. S. Brewer, brigade; Carl Gibson, lithographer; Mr. Rettig, billposter; James Ferris, inside tickets; E. Deacon Albright, calliope player."

Albright left the show at Ford City, Pennsylvania on July 4. E. E. Coleman pulled the elephant and steam calliope off the show and returned them to Dayton, probably due to lack of payments on the lease. The July-August *White Tops* stated that business done by the show did not warrant them. However, Mena did not stay long in Dayton. She was quickly leased to the new Duggan Bros. Circus. The steamer was not involved in that lease.

The July 17 *Billboard* said another elephant had been recently added to the Rice Bros. menagerie while the circus was playing western Pennsylvania. Business was reported as

good. There is no evidence of another elephant being on the show in 1934.

The *Billboard* article mentioned that Elmer Jones was in the show's concession department. He was one of the best and most experienced to handle the side show concessions, ie. the cooch dancers.

The July 14 *Billboard* contained a Rice advertisement seeking musicians, performers doing three acts, and Hawaiian dancers. Towns in Pennsylvania and Maryland were listed. This indicates that a number of people had left the show. The July 28 *Billboard* reported that side show manager Doc Oyler had left.

Rice Bros. headed south and by the middle of August was in Virginia. People continued to leave the circus. King advertised again in the August 11 *Billboard* for a cornet and a baritone player, an electrician for Universal plant, and inside people for side show. Three Virginia stands were listed.

The September 15 *Billboard* reported: "Stearns, Kentucky, September 8. After an absence of some years Rice Bros. Circus is visiting this section of Kentucky. The show played to a fair matinee and a straw at night here on September 4. For the last several weeks the show has been making the eastern shore of Maryland and Virginia. Howard King, manager, is enlarging the show preparatory to an invasion of cotton country in the south. Kokomo Andres, legal adjuster, entertained one hundred children here, inmates of the county orphanage. Winter quarters for Rice Bros. are maintained at Louisville, Kentucky. The show will be out until Christmas."

News of the closing came in the September 22 *Billboard*: "Cincinnati, Ohio, September 15. The management of Rice Bros. Circus informed the *Billboard* this week that a great deal of inclement weather and resulting poor business had been encountered and it was decided that the show end its tour for this year and prepare for enlargement for the next season."

Band member O. E. Duenweg later wrote the *Billboard* that Rice Bros. did not exhibit at Stearns, Kentucky on September 4 but loaded its trucks at Pine Knot, Kentucky and moved to quarters at Louisville.

If the information from Duenweg was correct, the article from Stearns two week prior was a complete fabrication. Unfortunately, too often things like this occurred in *Billboard*, making it difficult for historians to present a true story.

Nothing further was published about Rice Bros. Circus. It did not go out in 1935.

It is speculated that the Chevrolet dealer repossessed the trucks. It is not known what happened to the canvas and other equipment.

Howard King was no longer a circus owner. But he was still in the business in 1935 as legal adjuster on Orange Bros. Circus, a motorized outfit operated by John Willander. In 1936 he was on the advance of Bailey Bros. In 1937 he was on the advance of the Dan Rice Circus, operated by Ray Marsh Brydon. Brydon had used the Rice Bros. title in 1935 and 1936, but Howard King was not a part of it.

For the rest of the 1930s and 1940s little is known about King's circus activities. In 1949 King told the *Billboard* that he had retired several years before.

But he was back at it in 1954 when he joined King Bros. Circus, the largest truck show on the road, operated by his brother Floyd and his new partner Arnold Maley. Howard was in charge of inside ticket sales, one of the most sensitive positions on any show. Such a staff position was awarded to a family member or someone very close to the management.

Luke Anderson was on the King show in 1954. In an interview Anderson stated he told Floyd King that his brother was pocketing large amounts of money from ticket sales and was taking patrons in the back door and keeping the cash. Floyd ignored him.

OFFICIAL PROGRAM RICE BROS. CIRCUS—SEASON 1934		
ORVILLE BROOME Equestrian Director		HOMER F. LEE Musical Director
Ring No. 1	Stage	Ring No. 2
DISPLAY NO. 1 Grand Entry—the unique and gorgeous spectacle		
EGYPT		
Cast of principal characters:		
Queen Ellen - - - - -	- - - - -	Miss Ellen Saunders
Princess Billie - - - - -	- - - - -	Miss Billie Schwarz
Princess Dinkee - - - - -	- - - - -	Miss Virginia Atkinson
Queen of Never Land - - - - -	- - - - -	Miss Etta Moyer
Ivis, the dream girl - - - - -	- - - - -	Miss Ivis Moore
Premier Danseuse - - - - -	- - - - -	Miss Emily Wood
Trained Liberty Ponies, presented by Capt. Frank Zonga		Trained Liberty Ponies, presented by Miss Wallace
Herd of Highly Trained Elephants, presented by Capt. John Schwarz		Herd of Highly Trained Elephants, presented by Miss Dolly Bell
Here they come, Bill Bailey and his merry mad gang of fun provokers: Harry Heaney Frank Smith Will Parks Sid Green Fred Parker Jimmie Means Golda Johnson Bill Hare, and a host of others		
Frank Satiro Japanese Equilibrist	Miss Concha Vaello, in an offering from Sunny Spain	Sakroto, highly interesting foot work with the Japanese screen
Frank Hollingsworth, World's Greatest Somersault Rider	Bill Bailey and his shoes	Jessie Hollingsworth America's Most Graceful Rider
Miss Bennie Slaughter and her trained pigeons		
Maybelle Roth, feats on the Roman Rings	Jenkins Bros., Europe's foremost exponents of physical culture	H. Epperson, contortion on the Roman Rings
Introducing Wild West Champions, Cowboys, Cowgirls Bronco Busters, Ropers, Whip Crackers, in the Western Sports		
The Riding Irishman and his Bucking Mule		Spot Brown and his comedy Hurdle Riding
THE SAKROTO TROUPE		
Japanese foot slide, hair slide, and other amazing feats		
A bevy of beautiful girls direct from Hollywood, in swinging ladders, butterfly swing de luxe and Aerial Calisthenics		
THE EGYPTIAN NOVELTY		
SASCURUM, on the bounding rope		
CLOWNS—Twenty of the funny fellows in their antics		
America's Greatest Riding Act The Hollingsworth Troupe		The Riding Atkinsons, Tommy, Din, and Bill, Jr.
Introducing Bill Leon, Champion Greek Wrestler of the World		
An exhibition of grace and skill on a swinging ladder, Miss Virginia Lambert	Ellen Saunders, Aerial Butterfly De Luxe from Continental Europe	An exhibition of Aerial Calisthenics, Miss Peggy Wood
The Four Masons, Comedy Acrobats	North Trio, Comedy Acrobats	Brooks Duo, Comedy Acrobats
Introducing The Rice Bros. group of High School Horses, ridden by the acknowledged champions of the world: Billie Saunders, Thelma Briggs, Demetris Barker, Eleanor Fields, Pearl N. Fields, Pansy Hickey		
Harry Heaney's funny Clown Band Watch the fireworks!		
Jerry Nast, Feats of daring on the lofty perch		Birdie Leonard, Looping the Loop
Harold and Ellen Saunders, Wire Artists in daring, difficult and graceful acrobatic achievements on the Thread of Steel		
Gonzalez Troupe of Acrobats and Aerialists direct from Mexico, in daring achievements		
Riding dogs and ponies, presented by Burch Thompson		Riding dogs and chariot racing dogs, presented by Bill Hare
Indian Riders Chief White Bear and Company		Indian Riding Act Chief Little Dog and Company
REMAIN SEATED FOR THE BIG WILD WEST SHOW AND WRESTLING MATCH		

This listing of the 1934 Rice performance appeared in *Circus Magazine*, a generic circus program used by a number of shows. Pfening Archives.

On opening day in 1954 in the show's winter quarters town of Macon, Georgia I saw Howard King, always walking rapidly on the lot. I never met him but if I had seen him with his brother or Arnold Maley I would have made an effort to speak with him. Someone on the lot told me Howard had operated wild life shows on the West coast for the prior several seasons. He was about the same height as Floyd, but a little heavier.

Howard was not with Floyd during the final two seasons of King Bros.

During the Circus Fans Association Sarasota convention, March 18-20, 1956, Howard was observed each afternoon holding court in a rocking chair in front of the Orange Blossom Hotel.

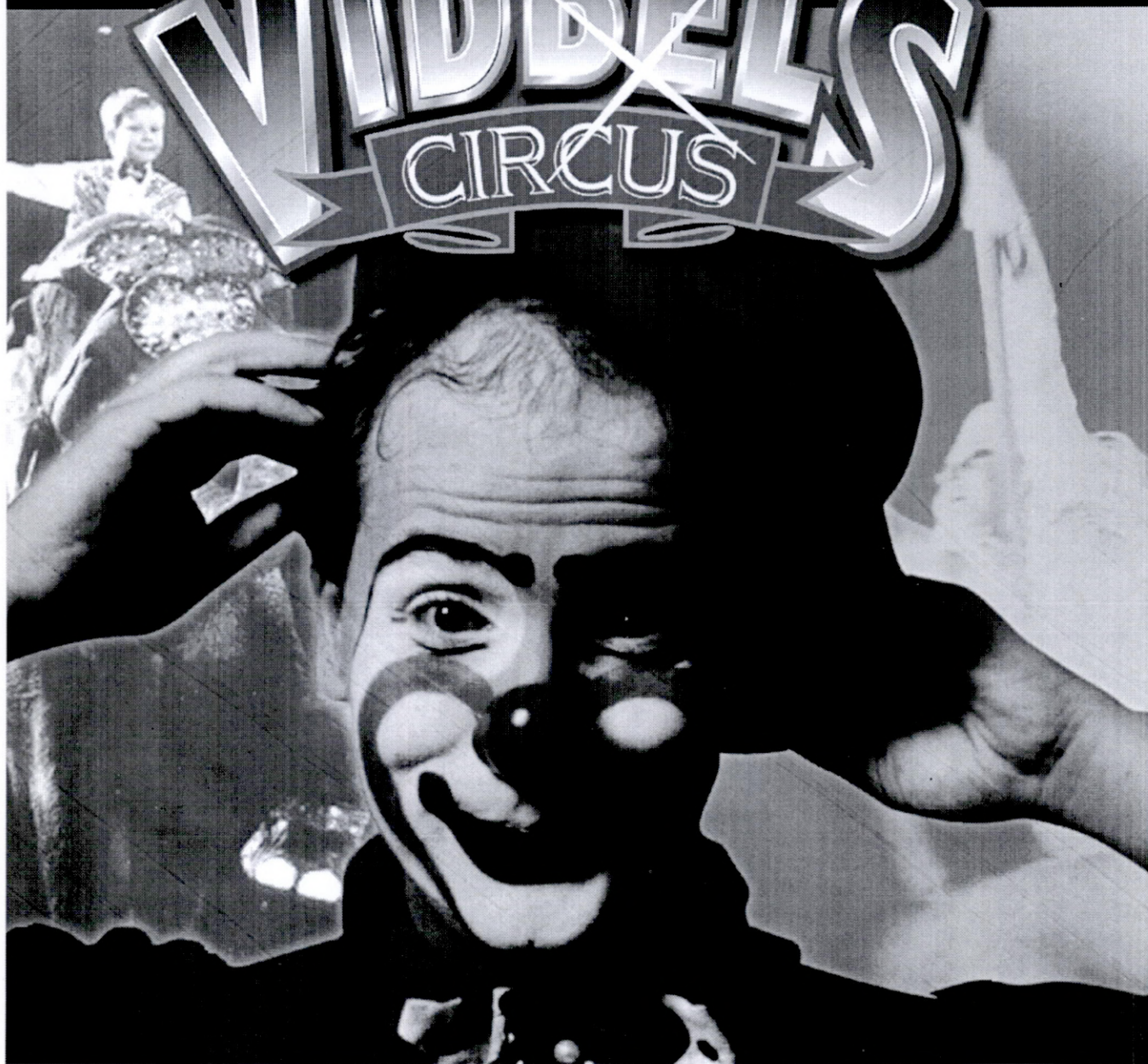
He died on November 15, 1975 at age 91 in Oceanside, California. His wife Gladys passed away the previous June. Brother Floyd died August 24, 1976.

Bill Rhodes contributed special help with this article. Ted Bowman, Fred Dahlinger and Fred D. Pfening, Jr. also provided information.

HAPPY HOLIDAYS

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CENTER RING TALKS, SEASON 1999-2000

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- Wed, Dec 15, 1999 11:30-1:00 p.m. → Pedro Reis
- Wed, Jan 19, 2000 11:30-1:00 p.m. → John Harriott
- Wed, Feb 16, 2000 11:30-1:00 p.m. → Margie Geiger
- Wed, Mar 15, 2000 11:30-1:00 p.m. → Steve Smith
- Wed, Apr 19, 2000 11:30-1:00 p.m. → Jackie LeClaire
- Wed, May 17, 2000 11:30-1:00 p.m. → Jeanette Williams

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EXHIBITIONS

- The Boys from Baraboo to Big Top Bosses: History of the Ringling Circus
- Vaulters, Balancers, Trainers and Jugglers: Circus Performers → historic photographs from Museum archives &
- Lions and Tigers and Bears, Oh My! → historic circus poster collection

SPECIAL EVENTS

- Circus Celebrity Night → Fri, Jan 14, 2000
- Windjammers Concert → Sat, Jan 29, 2000

All dates subject to change. All events free to members and/or with regular admission price except as noted (\$). For information call 941/351-1660 or 359-5700; for Membership, call 359-5748. → Cover Photo: Elliot Erwit, American, 1928-, Reno, Gelatin silver print.

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Frederick Whitman Glasier, American, 1866-1950 Charles Carlos and Dogs Print from 8x10 negative Negative number 1095

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WORLD BROS. 1923
ROBBINS BROS. 1924-1931

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siding at the Granger quarters. All let-
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Phoenix, AZ 85036



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Happiness this Holiday
Season and the coming year.**

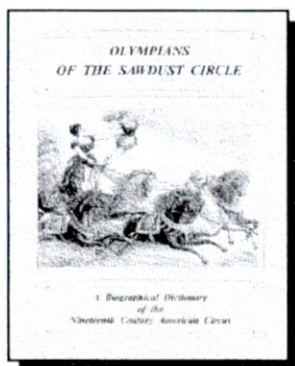
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Side Lights On The Circus Business

PART TEN

By David W. Watt

August 30, 1913

It was away back in the late sixties or the early seventies that a then young man by the name of Willis Cobb started out in the show business with the old Van Amburgh show. Of course, in those days shows all went by wagon and no one ever dreamed that a large show would ever be taken over the country by rail. In those days a man was expected to do anything that turned up in the show business from that of manager to driving a pair of mules over the road at night. The management soon found a handyman in Willis Cobb. He was thoroughly reliable and could always be found at his post whether lecturing in the sideshow on freaks, driving a team over the road dark nights, or acting as manager of the show. Willis Cobb was always in the job. In this letter I will sidestep a little and tell you something of the secrets of the trade and give you a peek behind the curtains.

For the most part this will be in Willis Cobb's own way of telling something about the ups and downs in the show business or at least as he found them during his many years in the business. Years ago the boys used to say that it was no wonder that Willis Cobb was a natural showman, as the Indiana incubator hatched out more shows than any one state in the country.

Everybody knows Willis Cobb—that is, after identification; then you'll say, "Oh, yes." If you ever did much circus going in your boyhood you will, at least, have seen him. Didn't you ever stand at the side of Jake Bentley's barn or Joel Jessups' blacksmith shop back home looking at the circus posters, and don't you remember a little man standing on the head of a rhinoceros and dressed in red coat and pants, white vest

and stockings, hair combed down very neatly by aid of bear's oil and very blind whiskers parted in the middle? Then a little later there was a picture of the same man standing dressed in the same way in the act of firing a revolver in a cage of open-mouthed lions. Well, this was Willis Cobb. Now you know him.

He has filled every position from truck driver to general manager of The Greatest Show on Earth. They are all "greatest," but this particular one was Sells Brothers. When a boy, he trained the family house dog to make change from a handful of dimes and nickels and to pick trumps out of a deck of cards. He got a job exhibiting with Van Amburgh's wagon show. The dog died too far away from home to walk back and Willis had to "drive truck." Then he trained a rhinoceros to go through various stunts. Later and for many years he devoted his attention to lions and other members of the family ferocious. They used to say that Willis Cobb could make a tame lion roar louder and open his mouth wider than any man who ever put a foot on sawdust and this isn't circus press agent talk, either, but of the private confines of the dressing tent.

Once, a good many years ago, Willis got stranded in Rushville, Indiana, and had to mortgage a cage of monkeys to the proprietor of the old Jones Home for a winter's board. hardware where he and the village

loafers played seven-up all winter, the loafers contributing enough coal to keep the monkeys warm.

During the winter the hotel proprietor wanted to make a long visit to kinfolks up at McCordsville and left Willis in charge of the hotel. His first innovation came the very first day; he moved all of the furniture out of the ground floor parlor, ripped up the carpet, built a bar in one corner and laid in a stock of liquors. It is a matter of official history that Willis Cobb was the first man to serve a steamboat cocktail in Rush county. A steamboat cocktail is common on the Ohio and Mississippi rivers and is produced much the same way as the traditional Manhattan except that bitters is used somewhat resembling hair oil, then a piece of cut lemon is rubbed around the top of the glass, after which the glass is dipped in the powdered sugar drawer, forming a lemon candied rim. Willis didn't know it, but the proprietor was a red-hot, fire-eating prohibitionist. When he came back and saw the bar, he threw a fit, but when he saw the receipts in the cash drawer of the same—well, he reformed. The next summer when Willis came around with the Wallace show there was a banner stretched across Main Street which read, "Welcome to Our City," and it was in honor of Willis Cobb and the steamboat cocktail.

This was years ago. Willis has lost all of the showman mannerisms, for his later career as a large employer of labor and the responsibility of moving a railway circus caravan have given him roll-top desk ways. A few years ago he concluded he had earned a rest and retired. Occasionally he goes downtown and stand around the front of a theatre when the crowd is gathering. He seems to feel at home



in a crowd for it reminds him of his old days of activity. Then he will go home to his living room and probably some boys will come in from the neighborhood and he tells them stories of his circus days about the dog that would make change and pick out trumps, of the trained rhinoceros, of the roaring, open-mouthed lions and others of the family ferocious. But the tale the boys like best is of Willis' life in a side show with Sells Brothers Circus and it is best as he tells it in his own way.

"It was a hard life. We gave performances in the morning and afternoon almost continuously. Some-times we did thirty or forty performances a day and I had to do my little turn every fifteen minutes. The manager did not think I was earning my money, however, so he gave me other work.

"My first task was to lift Big Bettie, who had the platform next to me, to her feet when the lecturer did his spiel about her. She weighed 465 pounds and measured ninety-six inches around the waist. In spite of this she was light hearted and was always joking with the members of the company.

"In a few days it became my duty to lecture on the freaks in addition to my tricks. We opened the performance with Lamo, the human pin cushion, who pushed pins through his cheeks and the fleshy parts of his arms and ended his performance by jumping on broken glass in a box and doing a dance. Then came Hattie. I always wound up my spiel about her by pointing out she was single, but willing to marry. The man who got her, if she was worth her weight in gold, would have a whole mine.

"The next freak in line was Mlle. de Leon, the Circassian Beauty, who really came from Elkhart, Ind. Her hair and eyebrows were dyed the lightest color possible and the hair was waxed so as to stand straight up from the head. In addition to being a Circassian lady, she was a snake charmer.

"On the next platform was Thardo, the Mexican knife thrower, who was

a Pennsylvania Dutchman. He hurled knives at the tattooed lady. She stood up against a board and Thardo sent the knives whizzing about her, through her hair, by the ears and throat, under her arms and down both sides of her body. This tattooed lady was an Englishwoman and in my lecture I used to tell a thrilling story how she was ship-wrecked on the island of Borneo, adopted by the natives, tattooed by them and finally made their queen. Then I would describe her rescue ten years after by sailors on a trading ship.

"Next to Thardo was Coffee, the skeleton dude, who weighed fifty-four pounds and stood five feet ten inches. He was looking for offers of marriage and for ten cents told your fortune and pictures of your future wife or husband.

"We carried an iron cage and when we could induce a colored man we would paint him with raw colors, put a ring in his nose, rings in his ears and lock him in the cage where, during the performance, he would munch savagely on a big bone. He was the famous Wild Man from the Caves of Abyssinia.

"Just as soon as the freak's act was finished, she would put on a dressing gown and go to the ballyhoo stage in front of the tent and do stunts to attract more customers. Thardo, the knife thrower, would do a contortion act and Mlle. de Leon sang coon songs. Then the new performance would go on and we would keep up without interruption from 9:30 in the morning till dark.

"All the members in the company ate and slept in the tent. We had breakfast at eight o'clock and supper at seven at night with a cup of coffee and a sandwich between times without stopping the performance. The tattooed lady, the snake charmer and Lamo received extra pay for cooking. An oil cloth was spread over one of the freak platforms and this was our table. The food was not of the best quality, but the fresh air and hard work gave us large appetites. I have since eaten in fine hotels all over the world, but as long as I live I shall

never forget the smell of coffee coming from the cooking tent in the early morning."

When Willis has finished this story he would get up from his chair and walk over to the window to a cage. It isn't a cage with iron bars like the ones in which the show bills of old pictured him, but just one of brass wire, and in this cage is the only thing to remind Willis Cobb of his old life--a little yellow canary that he has trained to do tricks.

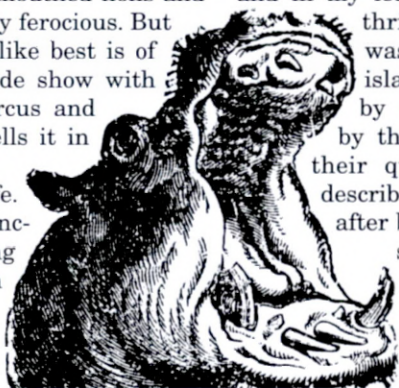
September 6, 1913

The A. B. Miller Carnival Company has come and gone and although I did not see much of the show outside of two or three attractions, it seemed to be clean and up-to-date and at least some of the feature acts were high class. Under the shade of a big tree on the bank of the river stood a big wagon which served as the office for Mr. Miller and his secretary. It was well furnished with writing desks, a safe and a roll top desk, and it was here that all the business connected with the show was transacted. Here all the men were hired and paid off and all the bills connected with the show were paid.

Mr. Miller is a young man but twenty-seven years of age and has been in the business since he was eighteen. He was born and raised in Winona, Minn., which city he still calls his home. Mr. Miller owns all his own cars and big wagons but more or less of the attractions are worked on a percentage basis.

I spent something like an hour in his office and during that time many bills came to the wagon and when they were properly O.K.'d and receipted, there were not questions asked, but their money, handed them as freely as though they were buying tickets for the show. It is business methods like this that make shows popular and everyone who does business with a show of this kind always has a good word for them.

The one act with the show that interested me most was the wild animal show of Harry G. Wilson whom I have known ever since he first started in the business. Harry's first venture was that of a concert ticket seller with James A. Bailey with the Barnum show. This was in the eighties and in those days young men who



could run a typewriter and take shorthand notes were not so plentiful as they are now. Harry had only been with the show a short time when Merritt Young, who was the ticket agent and treasurer, noticed that he was a bright, up-to-date young man and asked him to help him out in a busy time in the ticket wagon. Harry had written but few letters for Merritt Young when he said to him, "If you had a typewriter, I could do this work much faster and easier. I know how to run one and for that matter can take shorthand."

Merritt Young, unbeknown to Mr. Bailey, bought a typewriter and started young Wilson to writing letters, and it was only a short time until James A. Bailey's attention was called to young Wilson, and he said, "Merritt, I have many letters to write to your one, and I want Mr. Wilson in my office."

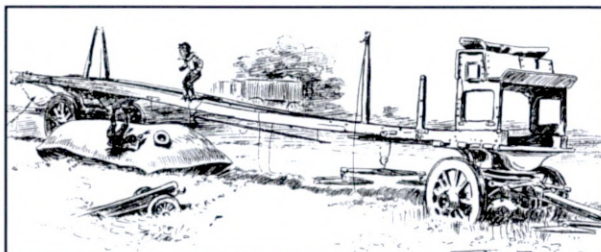
Mr. Bailey's office was a tent about fifteen feet square and always located at the left of the entrance of the big show. At that time Harry Wilson was getting a salary of \$12 a week and a percentage on the concert tickets which he sold which would amount to \$5 or \$6 a week more. The idea of settling down in Mr. Bailey's private office as his secretary at \$12 a week did not altogether please him, and he asked Mr. Bailey's permission when he was not busy to go in and sell concert tickets so that he could make a few extra dollars each week. This Mr. Bailey objected to, but he said, "Harry, I will raise your salary to \$15 a week and at the end of the season I will remember you." So it went during the season and at the close Mr. Bailey handed Harry a \$100 bill and said, "This is for a new suit of clothes and an overcoat."

Harry stayed with the show some three or four years. During this time he saved a little money and finally launched out with a small show with a carnival company and since that time has always been in the business. Four years ago after he had gotten together his present animal show, he made a contract with the Buffalo Bill show for his animal act and also as manager of all the outside privileges and stayed with the

show until its failure in Denver sometime more than a month ago. But during this time Henry Wilson had made a good deal of money, and while he lost some with the show, helping it in a financial way, hoping that it might finish the season out, yet he has plenty of this world's goods left.

Harry owns a small farm of forty acres in the suburbs of Philadelphia where he has made his home for many years. He has a fine modern home there, barns and animal houses for his show and everything that goes to make up a fine suburban home. An interurban road passes his property and twenty-five minutes takes him into the center of Philadelphia.

After closing with the Buffalo Bill



show Harry shipped his animals to Milwaukee where he joined the A. B. Miller Carnival company. The act of the lady with the leopards is billed for 18 weeks this winter through the eastern vaudeville circuit. His lion act he expects to send to Havana, Cuba, for the winter.

And now I want to tell you something about Robert Taylor who is probably the youngest as well as one of the best lion tamers in the country. Robert, who will not be twenty-one until next November, is an Englishman by birth and was born in the suburbs of London. His father was an animal dealer of London for some years, but he died when Robert was but four years of age and Robert was adopted by a Russian animal dealer and trainer. At the age of seven he was an assistant to this man for several years. Later he came to this country with the Bostocks and then went to the Hagenbeck show and two years ago entered the employ of Harry Wilson. Since that time he has broken in some four or five wild and ferocious forest-bred lions. Robert is one of the kind that can always be depended upon and

thoroughly understands his business. Harry Wilson expects next season to put a show of his own on the road with about ten cars and add many new animal features to what he already has and will tour the country and for the most part play one day stands. He is a thorough businessman and as the saying goes is "always on the job." That he will make a success of his new venture goes without saying.

A week ago last Wednesday when the Barnum show was in Rockford the Ringlings had a surprise sprung on them by the Buckbee Floral Company. While the parade was out in the morning and few people around the show Mr. Buckbee got his delivery teams all together and loaded them up with flowers and drove to the show grounds and decorated the big cook tent which is all under one canvas, both for the officers and the workingmen as well. The tables were four in number and something like 250 feet long and in this tent more than 1,000 people were catered to three times a day.

When the doors of the cook tent were opened for the noonday meal, the surprise was a complete one for in place of the cook tent of old, it was transformed into a veritable palm garden or a conservatory of beautiful flowers of all kinds. Although this was a new stunt that the Buckbee Floral Company surprised the Ringlings with, yet so far as I know or could hear, it never was mentioned in the Rockford papers. But the young reporters were possibly so busy watching the lady riders in tights that they overlooked this new feature in the cook tent.

Last week at the Beloit Fair one of the greatest features of the country was that of Madame Manette and her high school educated horses. The Madame and her husband travel together and in private life their name is D. H. Harris. I have known them both for many years as they started in the business in the seventies and their first appearance was on the fair grounds more than thirty years ago. Mr. and Mrs. Harris have traveled in almost every civilized country in the world and in '89 they

were one of the features with the Barnum show all over Europe. After their return to this country for some nine or ten years they have been a feature in the fair and trotting circuit which takes in all the large cities of the East.

They told me they were billed up until the fifteenth of November and would undoubtedly be out till about the holidays. They are at Libertyville, Illinois, this week and then go on east. They travel in a private car which is sixty-eight feet long, has four state rooms, a dining car and a kitchen, and the balance is used for the horses and the baggage. In this car they spend all their time from spring to fall. Their home is in Mendon, Mich., a small town about twenty miles south of Kalamazoo, and it is here that they spend all their time when not on the road.

I said to Mrs. Harris, "I suppose you have a maid." She said, "Yes, I have one and one that I can depend on. I do all my own work. You know I never have to be on the grounds till 2 o'clock or after and as our car is always sidetracked as near the fairgrounds as possible, it takes me but a little time to get to my work. And what would I do all the forenoon if it weren't for my housekeeping? Mr. Harris thinks I am a pretty good cook and he is the only one I have to please. I never was much of a hand to sit around and wait for the time to go to my work in the afternoon."

She invited me to stay and have dinner with them. "You know you could tell more about what kind of a cook I am," she said. But I was the guest of friends and had to leave and only too soon for the Madame is certainly interesting to talk to. An act like theirs that will linger in the minds of the spectators for years to come is the only kind to have, and if the secretaries of fairs and race meets would have as high class an attraction as this and keep out the cheaper ones, it would certainly be much to their credit.

The following letter by Quiet Jack Moore explains the terrible experience the Hagenbeck and Wallace show had in a storm on August 21st at Bloomington, Indiana.

"The Hagenbeck show experienced the worst storm of the season. It



Mr. and Mrs. John E. "Doc" Ogden on Sells-Floto in 1922. Ogden was side show manager.

came up about four o'clock in the afternoon, just before the big aerial act, and it looked pretty bad so they hurried the show and got it over just as it started to rain and blow a little, and most of us thought the storm had blown over. After supper it got very dark and we heard the thunder in the distance, so everyone got busy and got their trunks packed when it started to rain in torrents and the wind began to blow until the circus lot looked like an ocean and the tents like ships. I stood out in the rain and watched it all, and although it was terrible, it was a beautiful sight just as a storm at sea is, with the sky so black and the white tents rocking in the wind with the rain pouring down in torrents and the lightning was just as if the heavens were split in two. I walked over to Dock Christman, the boss canvasman, and he had just said, 'I don't think that I can hold the big top,' when the wind gathered her force and hit the big top and down she went, center poles and all, and there she lay like a broken sailboat. One after the other the tents went down until nothing was left but the band tent. Cages were turned over in the menagerie and one of the lions got loose, but was caught before any damage was done. The roar of the frightened animals made your blood run cold and added panic to the scene. The show folks were running in every direction, some to houses, others to wagons and some, like myself, standing out in the open watching the storm and wondering

what would be left of the show when the storm was over and if anyone was hurt, just then we saw a man go under the big tent, and as he came out of the wagons that some of the guy ropes were tied to, the wind blew the tent and moved the wagons so that when the man came from under the tent, the wagon struck him and knocked him down and the wheel of the wagon went on his leg. There he lay, pinned under that heavy wagon, and only about four or five of us were there to try and move it off of him which was impossible. We got enough men

to get it away from him, got him out and discovered it was Ellis Johnson, one of the musicians. He had gone under the tent to get his brass horn, and when we picked him up his leg was broken in two places. He was certainly the gamest man I ever saw in all my life as he must have been under that wagon fully twenty minutes and was conscious all the time and never once uttered a groan. When we picked him up he said, 'Well, boys, I guess I am done for.' They took him to the hospital and the doctor said it would be at least three months before he would be out. It was certainly a sad thing and we all hope it is not as bad as they now think.

"Mrs. Ogden and her son were both hit on the head by a side pole, but were not seriously hurt. Doc Ogden was also hit on the chin and quite a number of our folks were struck by poles as they were getting out from under the different tents. After the storm was over everyone looked like a lot of drowned rats. It was impossible to show that night so everyone got busy and started to pack up. It was some job as the wet tent was on top of all the props and riggings, and we thought that most everything would be bent or broken, but in that we were very agreeably disappointed as very little of the rigging and props were broken, so we got it all packed up and went on our way to the next town by twelve o'clock. I hope I will never see a storm like that again."

September 13, 1913

It was late in the seventies and well up into the eighties that two

brothers by the name of Orrin were known all over Cuba as the Barnums of that country. In those days along in the summer the Orrins would send their agent over to America to look over the Adam Forepaugh and the Barnum shows and pick out such attractions as they thought would be a feature in their show which would open usually about December the first in the Coliseum building in Havana, Cuba.

In those days it was the custom of both the Forepaugh and the Barnum shows to have European agents who would leave this country for Europe immediately after the close of the show and make a tour all over Europe for both animals and feature acts for the big shows for the coming season. But the Orrin Brothers in Havana were more fortunate, for all they had to do was to send their agent over to this country where he could find plenty of features with the two great shows.

It was along about eighty-two or eighty-three that they erected the big hippodrome in Havana, Cuba, much on the same scale of the Barnum and the Forepaugh shows in this country. For the most part they got their horses and lady riders in Havana.

But the Orrin brothers like the Barnums and Forepaughs have passed on and now the business of that country has fallen into the hands of some brothers by the name of Pubillones, and they are known all over Cuba and Spain as the Ringlings of those countries.

For the last few years their agent has been Frank J. Longbotham, a young man who has had several years' experience in show business in this country. Frank is not only their agent here, but is also assistant manager in Cuba of the Pubillones show. This show, for the most part, shows in the larger cities like Havana, City of Mexico and Vera Cruz. The seasons in that country are shorter than they are here, after showing the larger cities, the Pubillones show is divided and Frank Longbotham is given one and the Pubillones take another and start through the interior of that country in different directions. They have to travel by what is called the bull cart

route. These trips usually last for two or three weeks, and the hardships that the average performer has to go through on these trips are anything but desirable. They have to sleep in the carts, run their own cook tents, and their provisions are such as is possible for them to buy from the natives. The Blackstone and La Salle hotels of that country are far apart and the shorter these trips into the interior are, the better it suits the average American performer.

Frank J. Longbotham's home is at Chester, Pa. and he is there now spending his vacation. Antonio Pubillones sailed from Spain several weeks ago with his family to spend two months or more in this country. His manager, Mr. Longbotham, engaged a cottage on the Hudson River for him and his family, but a contagious disease broke out on the ship and they were obliged to return to Spain, but are expected to arrive here by the middle of this month on another boat.

Longbotham is well known in Janesville and is a close personal friend of Mr. and Mrs. John Manning of this city. It is to them that I am under obligations for many of the facts concerning the Pubillones Shows.

After Mr. Pubillones gets his family well settled in their cottage on the Hudson, he and Mr. Longbotham will visit all the largest and best shows and will undoubtedly find many new attractions for their shows for the coming season. They will probably both return to Cuba sometime early in November.

H. H. Tammen and William F. Cody.



One of the main attractions for the big shows in that country is the bull and lion fight in which the bull usually comes out victorious. While this may seem to be a barbaric kind of entertainment, it seems to be what the average Cuban and Spanish circus-going people demand.

General W. F. Cody (Buffalo Bill) and H. H. Tammen, associate owner of the *Denver Post*, *Kansas City Post* and Sells-Floto Circus, spent a few hours in Chicago Saturday, August 30, on their way from Denver to Detroit, where they were to visit the Sells-Floto Shows and incidentally confer with representatives of Buffalo Bill's Canadian mining interests.

They returned to Chicago Wednesday and thence proceeded to the Big Horn Basin where moving pictures will be made in which Col. Cody will personally appear. These pictures promise to prove of great historical value for they will bring out in a vivid manner the chief events in the life of Buffalo Bill who has played an important part in developing the West and has performed memorable deeds in the service of our country. During their stay in Chicago, Cody and Tammen were guests of General Manager Stevens of the Hotel La Salle and were tendered the use of the State Suite.

Arthur Davis was delegated to look after the comfort of the distinguished guests and right royally did he sustain his honors. A perfect stream of newspapermen and women and well wishing friends paid their respects during the day. The Chicago papers carried columns of interesting matter about the future plans for the Buffalo-Sells-Floto Combination next season.

Buffalo Bill has received all kinds of offers to appear in vaudeville during the fall and winter season. One came from England, offering him one thousand pounds a week to play the halls of London and on the continent. American interests are also keen to get Buffalo Bill's service and have offered him twenty weeks at a fabulous salary. It is not probable that Col. Cody will appear in the variety houses as his time

will be pretty well engaged for some time in looking after his ranches and mining affairs in the far West.

Mr. Tammen declared the Buffalo Bill-Sells-Floto Combination next year will be the greatest and most unique tent aggregation projected and the price of admission will be twenty-five cents. He anticipates plenty of opposition, but says he will be prepared for it. The Buffalo Bill-Tammen party, including Charles Address, vice-president of the Showmen's League, and others were guests of Harry Askin at a performance of "A Trip to Washington" at the La Salle Opera House August 31st, occupying a box.

The most characteristic and impressive thing about the modern circus is its utter lack of selfconsciousness. Big, blatant, unprecedented and extraordinary, a colossal conglomeration of marvels and anachronisms that moves and has its being in accordance with ironclad law, the essential spirit of the circus betrays no realization of the wonder, no

consciousness that all this is anything other than "matter-of-fact" and "everyday." That is why the "literary gent" who occasionally feels prompted to describe one of these remarkable a m u s e m e n t enterprises usually makes such a botch of his job. For he is selfconscious all the time he is about it, the more because the splendid indifference of the marvel upsets his poise and disturbs his self assurance.

Instead of emulating the spirit of little children who, after all, are the holy ones who really get close to the heart of the circus, he enters the tented city with some measure of condescension as a superior student of "social" and "economic" aspects, or as a patronizing artist capable of doing a neat bit of fine writing.

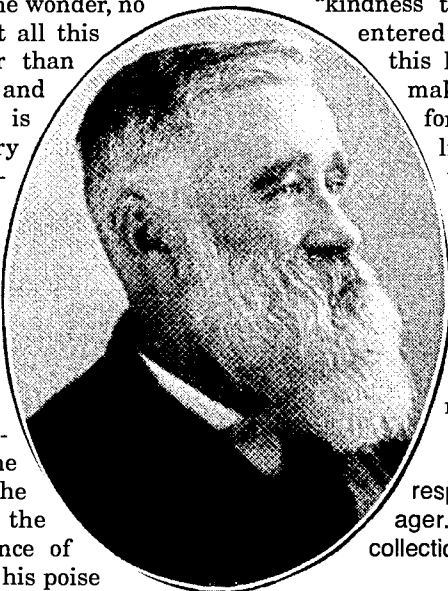
We are prompted to these remarks by two articles on the Greatest Show on Earth that appear in the current playbook of Madison. Prof. William

Ellery Leonard contributes the one and Editor Richard Lloyd Jones of the *Madison Journal* the other. The first thing suggested by these articles is that neither of these reporters went to the circus. The editor says it was a "seven ring show" and the professor saw a crocodile and a cobra. Indeed, Prof. Leonard describes so many features and things which never have been under a Barnum and Bailey "big top," that were his imaginative amplification not a failing of "literary" circus reporters, we might suspect that he had once served in the capacity of a circus press agent.

But editor Jones is even more starting, not so much in what he saw as what he doesn't know about the circus business. Indeed there is but one respectable fact in the whole speculative mess and that is the story about the baby elephant which he got from the press agent's life of James A. Bailey in the official program. But when he says that the "kindness to animals" policy

entered the circus with this little elephant, he makes a statement for which there is little warrant as there is for any of his assertions concerning the alleged changes that have come over circus performers and circus animals in recent years.

Frank Hyatt, respected circus manager. Albert Conover collection.



Why, we should tell him how years before that baby elephant was even dreamed of Burr Robbins nearly killed one of his roustabouts with a tent pole for having annoyed an old she-bear. As for the bareback riders and aerialists who, according to Mr. Jones, have developed from ignorant louts into "students of the art of equilibrium," it might be profitable for him to read a little circus history for instance, that of the Rentz family, ancient and honorable, and learn something of the character of the

profession in the past century.

If Prof. Leonard has tried to be "literary" at the expense of a simplicity and truth and thus missed the very spirit of the circus. Editor Jones has shot even wider of the mark by trying to patronize with half-baked knowledge an institution that rises mountains high above the need of such celebration.

Once in a while a "literary gent" writes understandingly and with inspiration about the circus. Oscar Wilde did that once and recently Brander Matthews. But on the whole, we prefer the yarn of a seasoned press agent like Coxey or the late Whiting Allen. They may not write literature, but they do write circus.

September 20, 1913

Seven years [actually nine] ago last month the Barnum show exhibited in Janesville on the lot at Spring Brook. This was the last exhibition of the Barnum show in Janesville under the management of James A. Bailey. The acting manager of the show then was Frank Hyatt, one of the highest, if not the highest, class manager in the business. His recommendations were twenty-eight years' service as manager of the Barnum and Bailey show.

I had known Frank Hyatt for many years. In the evening while visiting with him I said to him, "Mr. Hyatt, which of these acts in the show are yours?" Every old timer in the show business, whether he be manager, canvasman or driver, has what is known as his act. By this I mean one that he never tires of looking at. Nine times out of ten, if he is in the show, he's there at the time the act comes off that he is most interested in.

Mr. Hyatt smiled and said, "Why, I am manager of the show and all acts look alike to me."

I said to him, "Hand that to somebody else; I can't use it. You have an act in the show that you are interested in and never tire of looking at."

"Well," he said, "That is so. The balance trapeze man who stands a pop bottle on end and then balances himself with his head on the bottle and swings back and forth in the air is the one act that I am always there to see. I have seen hundreds of them in my time, but this one to me is the

most wonderful of them all."

With the Adam Forepaugh show the one act that I was always interested in was what was known as the ladies' flat race. The horses they ran were all thoroughbreds imported from England and there were always from six to seven in the race and they were always run on the square. Many times there would be groups of the boys standing around watching these races and more or less of them would bet on the outcome and the lady riders knew this so that we always got a race for our money and as a rule close finishes.

Years ago when I was manager of the Burr Robbins show, Charles Fish, the bareback rider, was the feature of the show and without any question the greatest rider that ever lived. This was my act and one that I seldom missed seeing. But Mr. Fish and I were not friends and many times I would look through a hole in the canvas and watch him ride; for I did not want him to think that I made a business of coming into the show for the purpose of watching his act. But I have always said I would rather see Charlie Fish fall off his horse and get back again than to see the average rider ride his entire act. Fish rode on the bareback of the horse, was a forward and back somersault rider, and could leave almost any part of the ring and leap to the back of his horse and would always alight standing straight up on the horse's back.

But Fish was not an easy man to handle, for he had been for many years the champion rider and had held engagements all over Europe as well as this country. Many times he would be late for parade. Finally I fined him \$25 for being late. He was not long in telling me that if I insisted on the fine he would quit. I said to him, "Mr. Fish, that is your part of it. Mine is to see that you are in parade and on time. But quit or work, this one fine you will have to pay, and if you stay here, you must be on time and you will get the same treatment that other people get and nothing more." He stayed and finished the season and was much easier to handle from then on for he was given to understand that he must live up to the rules the same as other performers did.

Now I am going to sidestep a little

and tell you something about the inroads that the great fairs of the country are making into the circus business. Last Saturday I attended what I think was the greatest county fair I ever saw. When I say this I mean from chicken house all the way through the stock department to the big horses and then to the vaudeville acts and the harness racing, both trotting and pacing. This fair was held at Monroe, in Green County.

I am now going to back up a little and tell you something of this fair in the early days. I spent my boyhood days in Green County and recollect well the early career of the Green County Fair. In the fall of '74 I took a trotter and pacer across the country to race them at the Monroe Fair. I drove one and led the other, as in those days a trip of 35 to 40 miles across the country we never thought of such a thing as shipping them in cars. The big race of the fair that fall was for a purse of \$200 and it was called a free-for-all trot. The next largest purse was \$100 and the rest of the racing program was from \$25 to \$75. In those days there were not vaudeville acts nor carnival shows and at this particular time there was but one sideshow on the grounds and it was called a menagerie. All they had was a small cage of two or three monkeys and a half grown cub bear. The track that we raced over that fall was not even thrown up on the turns and nowadays would not even make a high class cow path for their high bred cattle.

This fair has advanced probably as fast if not faster than any other and several years ago the officers knew that to give a high class show, one that would please the people, both in vaudeville acts and high class racing, could not be done with a cheap price of admission. Now Green County Fair charges fifty cents admission at the gate and fifty cents for numbered seats in the grandstand. But they give you something for your money.

Last Saturday afternoon they gave their patrons three races of \$1000 each. These were stake races. Also

two class races of \$400 each so that the people saw \$3,800 raced for in five races in one afternoon and these races included many high class trotters and pacers from the grand circuit and also three of the famous grand circuit drivers.

They had a carnival show on the grounds that reached almost the entire length. They also had a large platform opposite the grandstand where they gave vaudeville acts of a high order. At 11 o'clock in the morning

more than 5,000 people were there to witness the ball game. That is where Rock County came to the front, for the famous Footville ball team played the Monroe team and beat them 7 to 1. The girl friends of the Footville team had filled many baskets with edibles of all kinds. While many of the young ladies took the train for Monroe, their well filled baskets were sent in automobiles overland and at the close of the game there were some thirty of the ball players and their friends who sat down to dinner in a quiet corner on the fairgrounds. You only had to take one look at it to know that it was the kind that money would not buy.

There were more than 1,000 automobiles on the grounds Saturday afternoon and the crowd was estimated at 15,000. While I think that this is somewhat overdrawn, it was a wonderful crowd and while it cost \$1.00 for your admittance and the best seat in the grandstand, they gave you more than your dollar's worth. It looks to me as though all the management of the Green County Fair has to do is to keep the quality up and the gate receipts will always be satisfactory.

Last week closed the great provincial fair which is held at Toronto, Canada, and without question this is the one great fairs of the world. This fair, I think, was the first one to inaugurate high class vaudeville acts and hire trained animals and horses to entertain the public. It is said that more than twenty-five years ago they paid as high as \$30,000 for this kind of entertainment for their patrons.



A year ago this fall the attendance was a little over 960,000 paid admissions. For some years back the management has been trying to show the public that it could sell a million admission tickets at the gates of the Toronto Fair, and this year's receipts were a little more than a million and ten thousand admission tickets sold at the gate. When you come to think that the greatest state fairs in the country seldom reach the four hundred thousand mark, then we must admit that the Toronto Fair is certainly a great one. But they have the advantage; the fair runs twelve days. The fair pays out anywhere from \$75,000 to \$100,000 for their attractions and they not only come from all over the United States, but many of them are from Europe. You can go there and see many attractions that are new and novel and not to be seen anywhere else.

Mr. Alexander Galbraith of this city has been judge of the horses there at different times and only a few days ago he told me that the Provincial Fair of Toronto was getting to be one of the wonders of the world. This is why many circus acts, as they are known, and high class vaudeville acts have been able to get their price of late years, for as soon as the fairs open there is a demand for them all over the country. You can go to many a fair nowadays and see many good attractions of this kind such as you have been in the habit of looking at in the circus, for the average fair crowd demands a quality and is willing to pay the price. So if you are going to run a fair, don't be cheap.

September 27, 1913

In all the years that I was with the Forepaugh show I think it would be safe to say that 75 percent of the money taken in at the ticket wagon was silver; and although we paid all the bills and all the people with silver, yet it would accumulate and become burdensome, as I had only three ordinary sized safes to carry it in. One of my first duties after breakfast in the morning was to make the rounds of the banks in the different towns and try to get either New York or Chicago exchange or large bills for it. In this way I met many bankers all over the United States. In most

cases they were very nice to me and anxious to visit and know all about where we came from, how business was in different parts of the country and where we were going.

As a rule we always had to pay a small percentage for the exchange and it was only in towns where they were in need of silver for change that we could get any exchange free of cost.

One of my best friends on the road was the president of a large bank in Muskegon, Michigan. He would usually take a few thousand dollars, more for accommodation than any-



thing else. He always had a good box of cigars on the table and I would have to sit there as long as possible and relate to him more or less stories of the ups and downs in the business. The last time I called on him there he took me back in the office and gave me a cigar and said, "Now we'll have a nice, long visit, but there's an officer here waiting and any minute you say silver to us or we'll have you run in. Our vaults are full and no show for us to give you any exchange on this trip."

I was there more than an hour and when I got ready to leave the old gentleman said, "Dave, if you are coming down this way, bring us \$2,000 in silver and I'll give you exchange for it."

But they were not all of this man's stamp. One year we got into Waterloo, Iowa, early in the morning and before I had finished my breakfast there was a banker waiting in the office to see if I could not let him have some silver. He said "There is not enough silver at the bank now to change \$100 and many of the people will want change for all kinds of money today."

I was not long in getting him \$5,000 in quarters, halves and dollars and he told me that there were

two or three banks there who would be only too glad to get the silver. I started out to find them and on entering the first bank I came to I told them who I was, that I had several thousand dollars worth of silver that I would like Chicago exchange for, I don't think there was a man connected with the bank that was under sixty-five years of age, and the old gentleman whom I was talking to was concerned about the count being correct. I said to him:

"Our main object is to get rid of the silver. I'll bring you up in bags what is supposed to be \$2,000 dollars in quarters, halves and dollars and when you have had ample time to count it over and find out that it is real money--the same kind that you have been in the habit of using in your bank--you can send me a draft on Chicago for it. I will leave you the route of the show for four weeks and after that Mr. Forepaugh's address is 1528 Green Street, Philadelphia, and anytime this winter will do for the draft."

This happened to be one of the old, close community banks and even the treasurer of the show did not look good to them. I threw several bags of silver into the bank on the floor and told them to take their time in counting it over. The old gentleman told me, if possible, they would get a draft to me that afternoon. About four o'clock he came to the ticket wagon and gave me a draft on Chicago for \$2,000 and complimented me on the amount and the quality being correct. I tendered him a couple of reserved seat tickets for the evening performance, but he declined, saying he had never attended a circus in his life. But his kind you would seldom run across in the business for the average man would have taken the tickets and although he did not care to use them himself, would have given them to some friend.

One year we were billed to show in Springfield, Massachusetts. A few days in advance I got a letter from the late H. D. McKinney asking me to call on a friend of his by the name of Lou Powers. Springfield was Mr. McKinney's old home and he and Lou Powers had been fast friends for many years.

The Massasoit Hotel there at that time was famous all over the East as

one of the best hotels in the country. After partaking of one of their famous breakfasts I asked the landlord if he could tell me where I could find a man by the name of Lou Powers. He said, "Just step to the door and I'll show you his office building." I was half a block above the hotel and this was a little after nine o'clock in the morning. When I stepped into the office Mr. Powers had just arrived and there were twenty-five or thirty people standing in line waiting to see him. I had no time to wait so I stepped ahead of the line and begging his pardon, I told him my name and he took my hand and said, "I have been expecting you. My old friend, H. D. McKinney wrote me a few days ago that you would call on me." He called one of his men and said to him, "You look after this business. I will not be here again today."

Lou Powers was mayor of the city of Springfield, was president of one of the large banks there and also owned two paper mills at Holyoke, Mass., only eighteen miles above Springfield. He was a few times a millionaire, an all around businessman and a good fellow. This same Lou Powers got his start selling newspapers in front of the old Massasoit Hotel, beginning work when he was only nine years of age.

Mr. Powers introduced me to a gentleman there and he said to him, "This is an old friend and neighbor of Henry McKinney's in Janesville, Wis. He couldn't possibly come with a better recommendation." It was instances like those that helped to smooth the rougher places in the business.

Only two weeks ago Madame Maranette, or Mrs. Col. Harris, who delighted the people at the Beloit Fair with her high school educated horses, had a narrow escape from death at the Libertyville Fair when St. Patrick, the jumping horse, fell while making a high jump. Only Mrs. Harris' presence of mind saved her life. When she felt that the horse had failed to clear the obstruction, she threw herself from the saddle thereby getting out of the way so that the horse did not fall on her. She received a bad shake-up, however, and this coupled with the nervous shock made it necessary for her to remain in her



bed for several days. Friends of the genial couple will be glad to know she escaped so luckily.

The following story was taken from the New York *Clipper* and only goes to show how wide awake Beloit is for anything that they consider is for the betterment of the town: "The Showmen's League of America could consider no better spot for the site of its proposed \$200,000 home for injured and disabled showmen than Beloit. No doubt the gentlemen in charge of

the project have investigated or will investigate the proposition thoroughly with the advantages of Beloit. That is their business, and as they are all acute businessmen, who have made a success in their life work, they will arrive at the conclusion that is best for their organization.

"Beloit feels that it could do the League good if its home were located here. It has beautiful scenery; it is hospitable; it is near Chicago where many show people are always to be found, its health record is good. In every way it would seem to be an ideal place for the contemplated institution.

"But the home would be a good thing for Beloit, too. It would give the city a national reputation. It would not only bring a good addition to the city's population, but it would bring thousands of visitors here each year, and they would carry away good impressions of the city to their friends.

"For all these reasons Beloit would do its part to bring this home here. Other cities offer big inducements to get such institutions. Why shouldn't Beloit? We do not know what the League officers want the city to do, but anything within reason should be offered, for the permanent location of such an institution here would be one of the best things for the city in years to come that can be imagined.

"Let us not sit back and do nothing about his matter and then regret afterwards that we didn't land this prize."

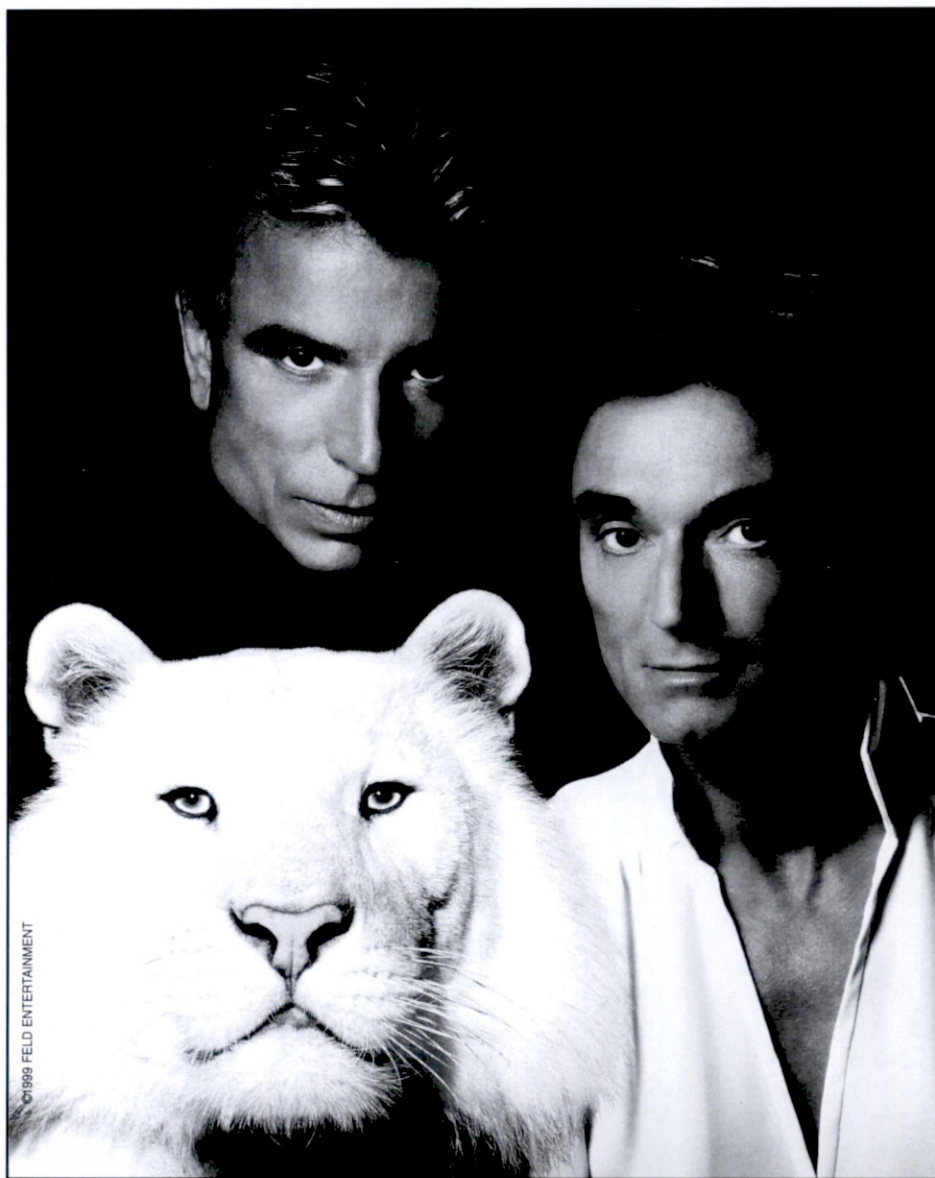
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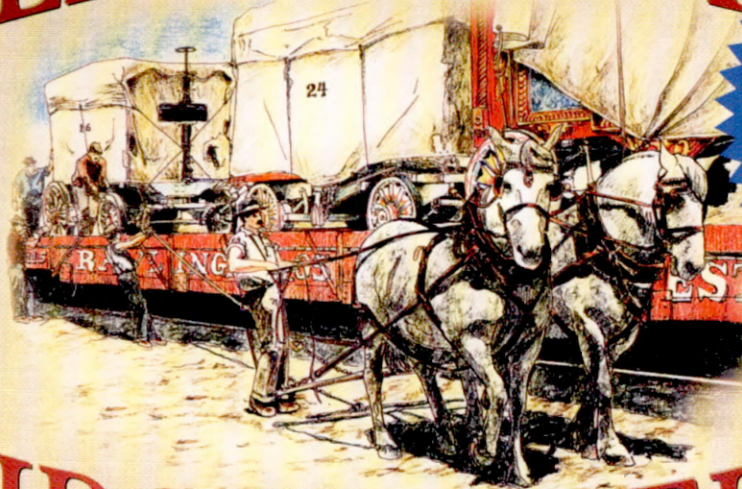


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IRON CREEK

by John S. Lloyd

This novel captures the innocence, excitement and danger of the Roaring Twenties through horseman Seth Newman, a nineteen-year-old Indiana man who leaves the family farm in 1923 to join the renowned Rawlings Brothers Circus.

From his first day on the job as a teamster, Seth experiences the harsh existence of daily life on the circus. He falls in love, copes with the brutal murder of an assistant and survives an attempted murder by fellow circus workers.

He also observes the seedy side of the Big Top during Prohibition with the smuggling of booze, dope and rampant graft.

He travels to Europe to secure new breeding stock for the traveling show. The journey introduces him to European gentry and reunites Seth with his lost love. But he soon discovers he is an unwitting pawn in an elaborate cross Atlantic conspiracy involving murder.

Seth relies on the common sense he learned on the farm to unravel a bizarre web of international intrigue.

LEAVING FLAT IRON CREEK is a novel that vividly portrays a young American's life in one of the country's most colorful institutions during the raucous Roaring Twenties.

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